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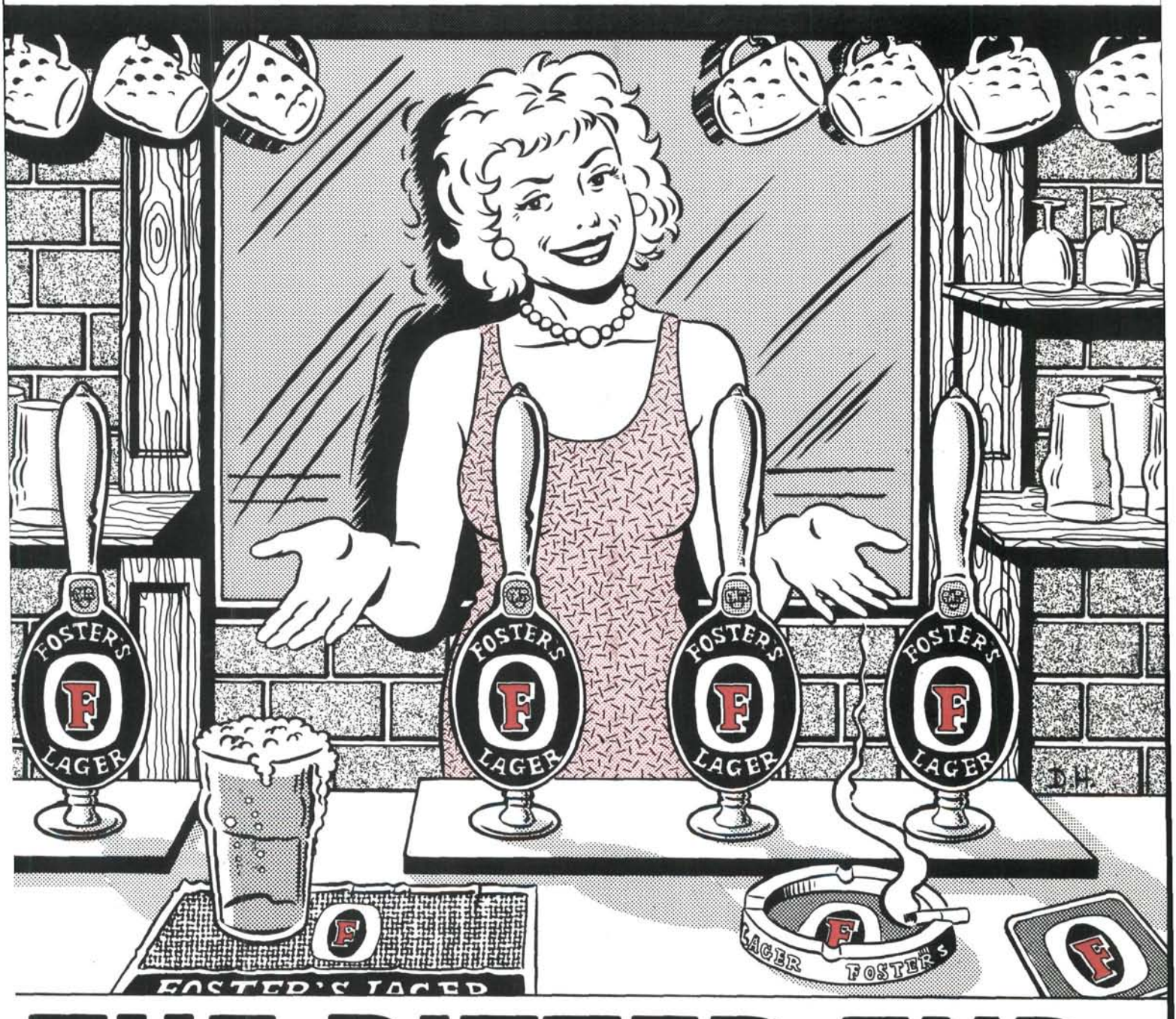

THE BITTER END

BENJAMIN ZEPHANIAH: You don't riot if . . .

GEOFF DYER: Tom Waits in Edinburgh

CLAUDIA WRIGHT: Gung ho diplomacy

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TOM WAITS

RAIN DOGS

NEW ALBUM "Well, time is always money for the boys at Union Square you can bust your ass till doomsday but don't forget to say your prayers, someone's got a wad on the back street, Sacco's got a bran' new slack."

ISLAND

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New Statesman

Cover drawing: David Hine

Ways to make you drink Fosters
If you have a taste for ale, or even for variety in your lager, you'd better watch out for the latest brewery takeover bids from Australia. ROGER PROTZ investigates 10

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As Thatcher overrules Hurd to throw fresh equipment at the police OLE HANSEN looks at the new law 'n' order powers

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Held over
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New Statesman

Vol 110 No 2847 18 October 1985

War clouds gather in the Middle East

KING HUSSEIN of Jordan has cut a tragic little figure this week. Alone amongst the players on the Middle East political stage he has seemed determined to keep some kind of crab-paced Arab-Israeli peace 'initiative' alive. In the process he is being crushed between the upper and the nether millstones of Israel and the United States.

In all of this, the dispute about who was and who was not to blame for the diplomatic bungle that ended in Sir Geoffrey Howe not meeting the joint Jordanian-PLO delegation in London on Tuesday is an irrelevant sideshow. Indeed, if any international peace process claimed that it was seriously damaged by the fact that a meeting did not take place between Sir Geoffrey Howe and an Anglican bishop in Amman and a former West Bank mayor, deposed in 1980 by the Israelis, that in itself would be proof that the process was going nowhere fast.

The ugly fact is that there is no current hope for greater stability in the Middle East precisely because there is not the slightest indication that the leading actors in the endless tragedy want it. Instead there is every indication that Israel, the United States and the PLO are hardening their respective positions. Little wonder that the King of Jordan, as the main actor involved with the least to win and the most to lose, has given an impression of dejection.

The other irrelevance is the debate about terrorism that has been thrown up by the PLO hijacking of the *Achille Lauro* and the US skyjacking of the Egypt Air Boeing. As any student of history knows, some political advances are achieved by peaceful political change; some are achieved by armed struggle. The moral debate, therefore, centres not in itself on the condemnation or defence of terrorism/armed struggle. It is about whether the ends are justifiable and about whether they could be achieved by more or less violent means.

In the context of the Middle East there is only one path that holds out the slightest hope of long run stability. It is that path mapped out as long ago as 1967 in United Nations Resolution 242, repeated with minor changes of nuance in various forms between then and now, in particular in UN Resolution 338 in 1973.

Behind 242 and other formulations of a possible settlement remain the two balancing principles. The first is that Israel should withdraw from all or sufficient of its occupied territories to provide a homeland for the Palestinians. The second is that the Arab world should recognise the right of the Israeli State to exist in peace.

The tragedy of this week is that events have played into their hands. King Hussein has been forced by US arm twisting and the scarcely concealed threat of Israeli attack against his country in effect to give up his alliance, signed with PLO moderates last February. The United States, with its active connivance in the Israeli air raid on Tunisia starkly contrasted with its treatment of the Egyptian airliner, is so clearly no longer concerned with any even-handed development of an Israeli-Arab settlement on the lines of Resolution 242 that it is hard to see any chance of Israeli or PLO moderates being able to argue their cases with success in their respective constituencies.

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When the moderates are discredited, as symbolically they have been over the affair of the PLO delegation to London or in the way in which King Hussein has been let down by the American failure to give his recent political initiatives any practical support, the hard men rejoice, because the initiative has returned to them. The result is that the Middle East looks more unstable than it has done at any time since the height of the 1982 Israeli invasion of the Lebanon.

In the instability, all the signs are pointing to another outbreak of open hostilities. History will charge the Reagan Administration with its failure to seize a unique opportunity to advance the Middle East peace process in the aftermath of the 1982 Lebanon invasion. Both the main protagonists in the area — Israel and the PLO — were then on the defensive. If the Reagan Administration did not wish to exploit that opportunity, there is not the slightest reason to suppose that it will try to create or exploit some other. What happened — or rather did not happen — at the Foreign Office this week is only a reflection of a much more fundamental inability to stop another drift of war. □

Mrs Thatcher and The Waste Land

LIKE SO MANY official bodies, the House of Lords Select Committee on Trade is a good deal better, in its report published this week, in its description of what is wrong than in its prescription for what should be done about it.

For all that it makes a damning enough analysis of the economic and industrial policy that this government has been following since 1979. Its impact is the more for the fact that the nominally all-party group that looked for a year at Britain's trading position before reporting is essentially a conservative body. It is not surprising that the government has thought it necessary to mount an instant damage control exercise.

The proof has indeed been in the eating. And the evidence presented is that the state of UK Limited is in almost every respect weaker than it was before the country was subjected to the ideologically inspired economic and social experiment that has come to be known as Thatcherism. When the phrase was first used in the early 1980s, the forecast that we would be witnessing the 'de-industrialisation' of Britain may have seemed a bit hyperbolic. Today it is a precise description of what has been happening as whole swathes of British industry, in themselves every bit as viable as their counterparts in Western Europe or the United States, have been wiped out — unnecessarily and with the Thatcher government declaring positively that their going was the path of progress.

The consequences have been recorded in the balance of trade figures. For the first time since we started the Industrial Revolution at the end of the 18th century, the United Kingdom is running a balance of trade deficit in manufactured goods. The government can argue that there has been a trend against us for decades and that is true. But the acceleration of the trend since 1979 has been astounding. We have gone from a surplus of over £5 billion to a deficit of nearly £4 billion in four years — a swing of over £9 billion. That is an accurate measure of the abject failure of the industrial experiment that this government has been following.

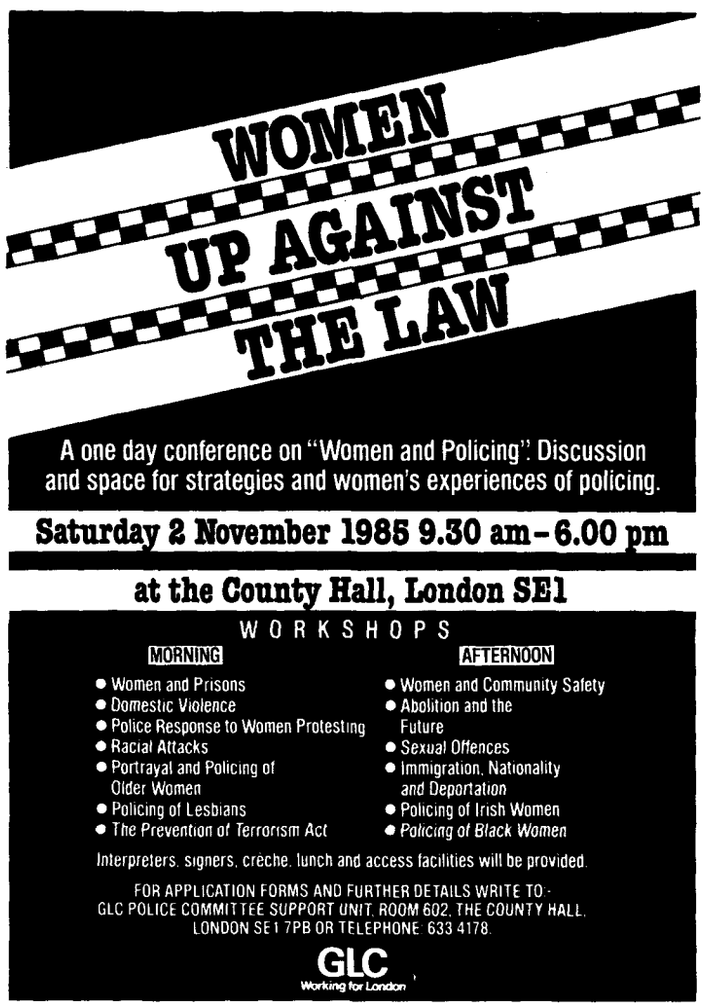
The most serious phase of damage occured when, in the name of what Denis Healey at the time rightly called 'punk monetarism', Chancellor Howe and his then assistant (now himself Chancellor) Lawson pushed interest rates so high that foreign exchange flooded into the country, driving the pound to levels that put much of British exporting industry into bankruptcy within a matter of months.

The most serious catastrophy for the future is that the windfall bonus that the United Kingdom has enjoyed across these years from North Sea oil revenue has, as a result, been used to finance current trading deficits, current expenditure and politically motivated tax cuts for the better off. It would have been difficult in advance to credit the possibility that Britain could enjoy the massive bonus represented by North Sea oil and emerge the other side of the great bonanza worse off in almost every way. Yet that is what has happened because of a doctrinaire refusal to see that the greater part of the windfall went into public (and private) investment for the future.

All of this has the profoundest implications for those planning post-Thatcher economic and industrial policy. For the British economy that the next government inherits will be immeasurably weaker in its fundamentals than, say, the British economy was in 1979. In particular, its recuperative capacity has been severely reduced.

The way in which this government has positively encouraged the growth of the service sector at the expense of manufacturing industry means that the bottlenecks in manufacturing industry are even greater now than they have been in the past. Any government, therefore, that correctly tries to use fiscal policy to get greater expansion into the economy is going to find that it will, even more rapidly than in the past, hit the constraints of shortages of skilled labour, rapid inflationary pressures and a balance of payments crisis through demand sucking in imports than can no longer be satisfied by the domestic market.

Further, it will be an illusion to suppose that the effect of these constraints can easily be held off by incomes or prices policies, formal or informal. As their Lordships in effect say with rather surprising vigour, Thatcherism has created an economic blight that is already casting a dark shadow on the government that follows it. □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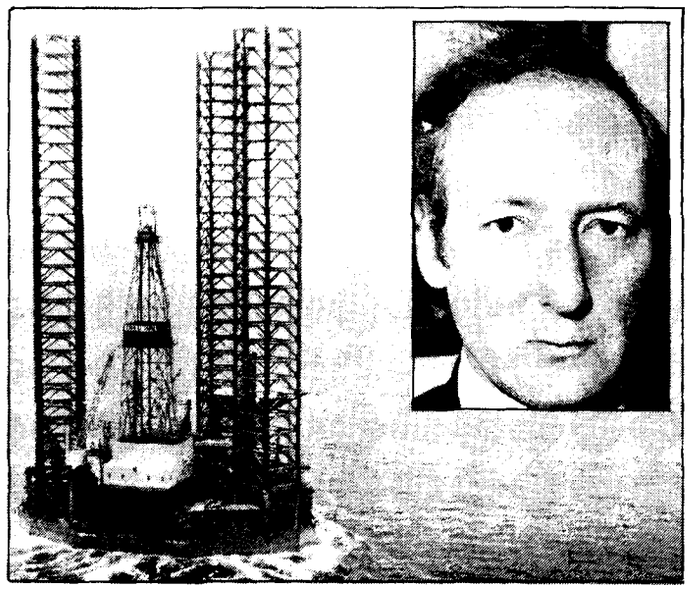
£100 MILLION TO BE MADE AS NUCLEAR WASTE DUMPERS SCRAMBLE TO GET RICH QUICK

INVESTORS in nuclear dumping are trying to appease environmentalists, capitalise on public fears, and simultaneously make a fortune by dumping nuclear waste below the North Sea. But, report DUNCAN CAMPBELL and PATRICK FORBES, they don't mind bending the rules of radioactive safety any more than the rest of the nuclear industry.



UPP

Shell

Failed newspaper magnate Algy Cluff (inset) — now interested in jack-up rigs

HUGE PROFITS could be at stake in a battle between oil and construction industry groups which propose to develop nuclear waste dumps below the seabed around European coasts. Earlier this month, the British nuclear industry's dumping organisation, Nirex, handed out two contracts to research new methods of building nuclear waste stores below the sea bed. More Nirex contracts are expected to be awarded soon.

One of the contenders for business from Nirex and BNFL is an oil industry company called ENSEC. The company's confidential briefing for investors has been obtained by the *New Statesman*. According to the prospectus, ENSEC's company directors think that a full-scale government contract to dump nuclear waste could bring them (or competitors) — £100 million in profits within ten years.

The stakes are high. To make such huge sums, they would only have to invest £2.8 million themselves. The document, dated 1984, talks about a 'rate of return of 850 per cent'.

ENSEC's directors are chaired by Tory peer Lord Newall, who they say will propose a private Bill in Parliament to allow coastal nuclear dumping. Meanwhile, other company directors have been working hard to win over trade unionists and environmentalists. Friends of the Earth have been paid £5,000 to help publish critical studies of dumping methods. Lucrative contracts have been discussed with scientists working for the Greenpeace organisation.

ENSEC's backers include Cluff Oil plc, run by right wing millionaire Algy Cluff, until recently the owner of the *Spectator*. The key figure in ENSEC is Cluff Oil director and oil rig designer Alex Copson, who now works for consultants Rig Design Services.

Over the last two years, ENSEC has spent at least £250,000 on a carefully constructed plan to win public and official opinion in favour of their project to use oil rigs to dump highly radioactive waste. They hope to cash in on public unwillingness to have waste dumps built on land, which they anticipate may eventually force the government and nuclear industry to look seriously at more expensive arrangements for burying waste offshore.

The ENSEC method is to use specially adapted North Sea oil rigs to drill wide holes to a depth of 10,000 feet. Nuclear waste containers would be stacked inside the shaft. Such shafts would be dug ten miles offshore, within British territorial waters, in order to avoid problems of international law or hostility from other countries.

Polls find public fear

ENSEC's public relations initiative has met with some success. An independent opinion poll commissioned from Gallup this summer found that the British public deeply distrusted the nuclear industry — almost totally, so far as the management of radioactive waste was concerned.

A market research survey, conducted in conjunction with the construction company Costains, also asked members of the public about who they *would* trust to supervise nuclear waste. They found that MPs of any party, managers from the nuclear industry, and anyone in the government, police, or armed forces were 'the last people' that interviewees would trust.

Public trust was limited to groups like Greenpeace, 'independent scientists', 'women', and 'investigative journalists'. There was 'deep public scepticism about the feasibility of properly monitoring [any radioactive waste disposal] system. Most people felt that bribery, corruption or hit squads might be employed to shut up dissenters'.

Nirex's current plan to find a land dumping site and bury nuclear waste in ten feet deep trenches was condemned by 77 per cent of those polled. In contrast, 71 per cent agreed that the seabed plan might be 'a safer system'.

Meanwhile, senior civil servants and industry figures have been lobbied. Government ministers William Waldegrave and Hamish Gray were seen as long ago as 1983. According to the company document, ENSEC hope that their PR campaign will eventually give the government and nuclear industry 'no option but to accept our proposal'.

Union bosses lobbied

Since 1983, the main obstacle to British government plans to tip nuclear waste at sea has been the unions. Since then, both the TGWU and the seamens' unions have resolutely opposed dumping operations deep at sea, in contravention of international agreements. So ENSEC took its private PR campaign to the Labour Party conference this year. Copson, accompanied by publicity agents, entertained NUS general secretary Jim Slater, together with Ron Todd of the TGWU.

The union leaders, together with environmental scientists such as Dr Peter Taylor of the Political Ecology Research Group, are remaining noncommital. But they have not rejected or written off ENSEC's proposal. For 'intermediate level' radioactive waste, it may be 'the best of a bad lot'.

But, despite publicly wooing Friends of the Earth and Greenpeace, the ENSEC prospectus privately defines 'onshore environmental groups' as a problem to be overcome.

And they have misled environmentalists about the type of nuclear waste they have been proposing to dump under the coast. Although they have talked publicly about dumping only medium radioactivity 'intermediate' wastes, the confidential company plans say that their 'main market' is 'the disposal of High Level Waste' — the most dangerous and radioactive type.

To move this waste to ports and dumping rigs would expose the public or workers to more than the current internationally agreed standards of radiation exposure, ENSEC fears. The confidential plans say that the company would have to lobby official radiation safety bodies to 'bring about a rationalisation of the limits' of public exposure. Such a 'rationalisation' would be of course completely unacceptable to environmental groups or trades unions.

Interviewed last week, Mr Copson at first denied knowledge of any plan to dump High Level Waste. Shown his company prospectus on 'ENSEC — Its role within the nuclear industry', he claimed that he didn't know the differences between High Level Waste and other wastes. Then he said that he had not written or ever seen the document, although his initials and office address appeared on it. Nevertheless, he said 'I back it'. He later rang to assert that ENSEC was now 'targetted' only on intermediate level wastes.

Pipped at the post?

But ENSEC's hopes to help the nuclear industry bury its nightmares far below the North Sea may have been frustrated by the old boy network of the industry itself. The research contract for planning boreholes in the North Sea has just been given to construction giants Robert McAlpines — who make nuclear reactors — instead. Another company will look at an alternative plan to tunnel out from the land.

Oil magnate Cluff has also pulled back, although retaining ten per cent, while city speculators have evidently not found the nuclear dumping pickings rich enough or quick enough. So ENSEC have gone it alone — still hoping to strike it rich in an empty oil well. ●

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PSYCHIATRIC ADVISER'S CONTROVERSIAL CURES

Northampton Mercury

St Andrew's hospital, Northampton — Tennent's former workplace

DR GAVIN TENNENT, one of the main figures in the proposed privatisation of mental health care for the dangerously disturbed, has spent the last decade carrying out much-criticised drug treatments on adolescent children. TIM TATE reports

TENNENT is a 'psychiatric adviser' to American Medical International — one of the largest private health organisations in the US. AMI has turned an approved school in Bassingbourn, Cambridgeshire, into a secure mental hospital to take ex-inmates of Broadmoor, Rampton and NHS regional secure units. But until recently, Tennent was medical director of two private psychiatric units which were the subject of a BBC *Checkpoint* programme last year.

Both St Andrew's Hospital, Northampton, and Spyway Unit in Dorset specialised in extreme 'behaviour modification programmes' for disturbed adolescents. Children — often sent from local authority care homes at costs of up to £900 per week — were denied food, attention and clothing unless they 'earned' points by good behaviour.

Highly potent mind-altering drugs such as Largactil and lithium carbonate were regularly used as tranquillisers. If children refused the medicine they were forcibly injected. Critics say both drugs can cause Tardive Dyskinesia — uncontrollable facial tics and limb-shaking — if used for any length of time.

Dr Tennent also used an anti-epilepsy drug, Tegretol, to combat the youngsters' disturbed behaviour. He claimed the behaviour was caused by a rare form of epilepsy and that the drug was otherwise harmless. But US medical experts say Tegretol should only be used for extreme and violent epileptic seizures and can lead to fatal blood-clotting problems. UK-based psychiatric critics of the regime claimed there was no evidence to justify Dr Tennent's belief that epileptic seizures are the cause of bad behaviour.

Children under sixteen appear to have few legal rights under UK law. The Gillick judgement reinforced the prevailing view that minors have no right to consent or refuse medical treatment.

'Nightmarish' units

But ex-inmates, Mind, the Children's Legal Centre and lawyers and social workers claim the regime interfered with basic human rights. Former patients described the unit as 'nightmarish'.

Dr Tennent left his £47,000 a year post as medical director of St Andrew's — a registered charity — earlier this year. The hospital later relaxed the adolescent regime. Dr Tennent continued to run the Spyway Unit through his own company Psychiatric Management Services Ltd.

He defended his behaviour modification programme with a survey showing some improvement in adolescents who had been on his unit, and justified the forcible administration of psychotropic drugs as 'damping down a fire' in extremely disturbed youngsters. He said last week his new hospital would operate its own behaviour modification programme. ●

Hurd's hurdle

THE FIRST major national conference on racial attacks takes place this Saturday (18 October). The main draw ought to be the promised participation of Douglas Hurd — it should be an opportunity to see if he's prepared to take the issue any more seriously than his Home Office predecessors. But as we go to press it looks very much as if he's going to cry off and send his minion David Waddington instead.

The conference, organised by the Asian magazine *New Life* has been dogged with problems. The Tory-Liberal controlled London Borough of Waltham Forest was most reluctant to let them use the council chamber — despite having a high level of racial attacks in the borough. And it has proved almost impossible to get SDP and Tory MPs to attend.

Jolyon Jenkins

Put your shirt on Labour now!

THE POLITICAL conference season has boosted the Conservatives' ratings in the opinion poll that really matters. All the bookmakers now have the Tories heavily odds-on to be the largest party after the next general election.

This brings the parties to roughly where they were before the Brecon and Radnor by-election (our last Index, *NS* 2 August, was calculated just afterwards). The Tory conference itself had no effect on our Index. Both Ladbroke and William Hill reported £10,000 bets on the Tories at 5-4 against during the Liberal conference in Dundee last month and made the Tories odds-on favourites during the Labour conference.

All three bookmakers report that no one will bet on the Labour Party, although Ron Pollard of Ladbroke says 'we can always take money on the Alliance at 7 or 8 to 1 — it was the same when it was just the Liberals.'

We've left Coral out of the Index again, on the grounds that they have hardly taken any money. If they were included the state of the parties would be Tories 54½%, Labour 34½%, Alliance 11%. Coral seem to be convinced of a Tory victory and offer easily the best odds for anyone wanting to bet on Labour being the largest party (9-4) or the Alliance (10-1). Misguided souls wanting to bet on the Tories should wend their way to Ladbroke (4-5 on).

NS tick-tack Index*

	Score	Change since 2 Aug
Con	50%	+7%
Lab	38%	—4%
Lib/SDP	12%	—3%

The 'score' is the percentage 'probability' of each party winning the greatest number of seats at the next general election, based on the odds quoted by Ladbroke and William Hill. We turned these into percentages (eg evens = 50%), rounded them down to add up to 100%, and took the average.

John Rentoul

★ tick-tack: 'Bookmakers' telegraphy by arm signals' — *Chambers Twentieth Century Dictionary*

GLC goes polyglot with its lesbian & gay charter

THE 48-PAGE London Charter for Gay & Lesbian Rights *published on 8 October by the GLC in co-operation with the GLC gay working party is to be made available in 16 languages — in line with the GLC policy of making significant publications comprehensible, both in the London area and beyond, to those for whom English is not their first language.*

Brought out just in time for the first-ever debate on lesbian and gay rights at Labour conference (4 October), the 2-colour brochure, which uses pink in recognition of the universally used pink triangle badge of lesbian and gay liberation, is being sent to foreign embassies in the UK as well as to local authorities, unions, police and other organisations who are or ought to be interested.

52,000 copies are being printed, with a budget allocation of £89,758. Copies are available from Room 234, County Hall, London SE1.

Andrew Lumsden

AUEW-CEGB links revealed

LETTERS between Keith Snoddon, national organiser of the engineering union AUEW/TASS and Brian George, Project and Technical Director of the Central Electricity Generating Board, passed to the *NS*, reveal a cosy relationship between the two — particularly over the question of the union's policies on nuclear power.

In one letter dated 3 June 1985 Mr Snoddon writes: 'I am pleased to advise you that the motions opposing nuclear power at our annual RC [Representative Council] Conference were defeated. The result of this conference decision means that the union will continue to support a balanced power generating policy, using all available resources, including nuclear power. Trusting this news will be welcomed by the CEGB . . .' In his reply, Mr George confirms his delight and offers AUEW/TASS further information about nuclear power, in particular the PWR.

The two friends will no doubt be able to sustain their correspondence for some time — AUEW/TASS is one of the few remaining unions to back nuclear power and few observers think this will change.

Jane Dibblin

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TWO DIE DURING HSE's 'SAFETY EXPERIMENT'

Camera Press

A SECRET EXPERIMENT by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) to halt visits by factory inspectors to Costain's 150 building sites — to see if firms could 'police themselves' — left thousands of workers without normal health and safety cover. IVOR GABER reports

DURING the experiment, which lasted for over a year, there were two deaths on Costain sites — compared with a previous total of three over the past ten years. Neither trade unions nor workers were told of the experiment.

Officially it began in September last year, although Costain's thought it had been operating since April 1984. And while the HSE claim it ended 'some time this summer', Costain's safety advisor says: 'It's still going on until someone tells us to the contrary.' He pronounces the trial 'a complete success', but the HSE are reserving judgement until they've had a chance to study the results in detail.

The HSE were well aware of the controversial nature of what they proposed. In a secret memo, factory inspectors were told: 'complaints which are about politically sensitive matters or from trade union officials or where there is serious potential risk to either workers or members of the public should continue to be investigated . . .'

There's particular anger among trade unions about the Costain experiment, not just because they weren't informed, but because the construction industry — which accounts for almost half the annual total of industrial deaths and which is five times as dangerous as other industries — was singled out for guinea pig treatment. Building site deaths have been increasing dramatically: in 1982 there were 17; the next year, despite a massive publicity campaign called 'Site Safe 83' there were 148. The main reason for the growth, as the HSE concedes, is the increase in small subcontracting firms and self-employed workers, where it's almost impossible to enforce Health and Safety regulations.

The HSE's decision to drop all Costain factory inspections for a trial period was their remarkable response to this growing problem, and formed part of a larger plan announced earlier this year. Under the scheme the HSE would pass more of their work to local authorities, some to insurance firms and some to the 'more responsible' firms to do themselves.

Privatising safety

But no extra money was to be provided for local authorities to carry out the extra work, and this at a time when they are having trouble meeting their present commitments. Turning the work over to private insurance firms is even more frightening: as they're ultimately in business to make money, they'll go on insuring faulty items of equipment for as long as they continue to make a reasonable profit on *all* the insurance work coming from that firm — and not just the one bad risk.

Worst of all is the move to allow firms to police themselves. As Dick Pickering of the General and Municipal Workers' Union told the TUC: 'the vast majority of employers are now being asked to inspect and police themselves and then report themselves to the HSE for any breaches in the law.'

Small firms that have work subcontracted out to them won't be subjected to regular inspection unless specific problems have been drawn to the authorities' attention. Factory inspectors — who are employed by the HSE — are most unhappy about it.

And it's not just a question of distrusting particular manufacturers. Even workers are now putting health and safety issues low down on their list of priorities. The Chief Inspector of Factories, Jim Hammer, illustrated this vividly in his last annual report. He told of a factory where a 17 year old boy's arm got trapped in a conveyor. The boy flung a shovel into the belt to try and save his limb. When the parents came to the factory, instead of being outraged by the lack of proper safety procedures they promised to waive all their son's rights to compensation *and* pay for the damage to the conveyor belt, provided their son could keep his job. ●

MISCELLANY

Not *that* equal

Hurrah for the National Union of Journalists' 'Campaign for Real People', launched this year to counter journalistic stereotyping of women, black people and gays. And here is a real person: Andrew Grimes, a reporter on *Manchester Evening News*. He's recently been elected Equality Officer for the Manchester branch of the NUJ, but 'equality' means different things to different people. Grimes believes there is 'real and detestable discrimination' against women and black journalists, and says so in the branch's newsletter. But he's also a homophobe. He attacks 'promiscuous buggers' for spreading AIDS, and the NUJ's Equality Council for its 'crankish nonsense' and its 'fawning attitude' towards homosexuals. Well done, sir! It's about time somebody stood up against the crypto-commie-lesbo-gay-Trots who are bringing the good old NUJ to its knees — well, I hope not *there* — yours appreciatively, the Marquis of Queensberry (decd).

Beats jumble sales

What university press of high repute would publish a book on Saudi Arabia by an Israeli paratrooper when the university itself (though it seems not the press) knew that he was getting finance from the CIA? Answer: Harvard University Press. The paratrooper in question is Nadav Safran, an Israeli of Egyptian origin, who ever since he took over Harvard's Middle East Studies Centre in 1983 has been dreaming up all sorts of clever fund-raising wheezes. A year ago, he secured $½ million for 'Moroccan studies' — ostensibly from the King of Morocco himself, though Harvard people claim it originated from the CIA. His most recent venture has been to sign a book contract with the CIA for $107,430 — in which he agreed to allow the CIA censors to delete anything in the final manuscript they didn't want to appear. Not only this, but his department also pocketed another CIA grant for a conference on Islam at the university this week. Harvard are livid, not because they object to Safran's money raising activities — but because they were expecting a 60 per cent rake off.

Flucking off

'Can I have one of Norman Fowler?' an entrant to our Flucky Draw contest asks hopefully. Sorry Madam, but Mr Fowler is not available in this range — probably because his gnome-like features too closely resemble a Fluck and Law model already. In any case, as BBC2's sitcom *The New Statesman* grinds to a halt, it's time to call time on the whole ludicrous enterprise. The final winning entry comes from V Ernest Cox with *TV Times*: 'It's the wackiest sitcom on television. It follows the escapades of a zany bunch of commune dwellers who have one thing in common — they're all transvestites! This brave new comedy stars Richard Briers as Harry, the insurance broker who commutes by train but would much prefer to be in a mini! Penelope Keith plays Martha, who's allergic to chiffon but loves all wool plus fours. Billy Connolly is Mad Jock who can't wait to get out of his kilt. But beneath the hilarity of cross-dressing, *TV Times* challenges the viewers' assumptions about sexual identity. It might look like a farce, but it's really a wolf in sheep's clothing.' A fitting note to go out on.

Right Charlies

But life must go on. 'For £16 a month you can help bring democracy to Central America.' Cheap at twice the price — except that the offer comes from the latest issue of Capitalist Worker, *the bulletin of the Young Monday Club. A double page spread invites us to adopt a Contra: 'Only 53p a day will support a Nicaraguan Freedom Fighter,' opines 'Charley', who's dressed up in the latest Rambo-style mercenary gear and hefting the*

best heavy machine gun US dollars can buy. Michael McCrone, chairperson of the YMC, has no doubts about his organisation's latest fund-raising efforts: 'This is more worthwhile than many causes. If people want to contribute money to an excellent cause I think it is quite commendable.'

Sunstruck

'I'm realising how addicted I've become to *The Sun* as a reminder of art and spirit. It seems but a tiny bit of light and yet its brilliance lightens the universe . . .' A blurb quote from a new anthology, *The Best of The Sun*. Here are some more: 'Pervaded with a beautiful spiritual quality . . .' 'I am unable to think of any other publication I'd rather appear in, nor any audience I'd rather speak to . . .' '*The Sun* tries to print the truth . . .' Oh *come on now*: not even Kelvin Mackenzie can believe that. But he can sleep easy: the *Sun* in question is an American literary journal celebrating its tenth anniversary.

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IFL

'Perhaps my wife got it wrong'

Christabel Boyce was a 'nagging wife' an Old Bailey jury heard last week. She made her husband's life a misery by her incessant pestering that he get a job. So demanding was she that two years ago Nicholas Boyce abandoned work on his PhD and got work as a cleaner. The couple could not get on and Christabel was seeking a divorce. She told her solicitor that Nicholas would object to her taking their two children to live with her and she was 'apprehensive' about his possible reaction if she obtained custody.

She had cause for apprehension. Nicholas strangled her with electric flex, dismembered her body, boiled it, packed the pieces in plastic sacks, encased her head in concrete, and distributed her remains around sites in London. He had, the Recorder of London, Sir James Miskin, told the jury, 'lost his self-control', but, 'to his credit' had given himself up to the police. Sir James ruled that the prosecution could not submit as evidence a volume of *Crime and Punishment* found in Boyce's flat, in which cases where manslaughter had been put forward as a defence for killing were underlined. After legal submissions in the absence of the jury he decided that it would be impossible to prove who had underscored the passage.

Nicholas Boyce was defended by Michael Wolkind who put it to the jury that Christabel was a 'nag and a bully'. His evidence for this claim was provided by Nicholas Boyce. She had 'forced' her husband to abandon his philosophy studies and to take a job as a cleaner, work totally unsuitable for an economics graduate. He did not mention that Mrs Boyce had supported her 38-year-old husband for many years because of difficulties he had experienced in completing his doctorate, nor that she had only given up her job as a hospital technician after the birth of her second child.

Wolkind argued that Boyce's possession of the equipment necessary to dismember the body and of the concrete used for encasing the head was not sufficient evidence of a premeditated plan to commit murder. The jury was not allowed to hear of the underscored passages in *Crime and Punishment*.

Nicholas Boyce was acquitted of murder and found guilty of manslaughter. Passing sentence Sir James observed: 'You may well have been provoked into losing your self-control and into killing your wife . . . a man of reasonable self-control might have been similarly provoked himself and might have done what you did.' He was sentenced to six years of which he is unlikely to serve more than four. It is probable that he will be released on parole after two.

The trial was not unlike those involving men charged with rape. Defence counsel argued, as in rape cases, that the man, not the woman was the victim. In order to gain an acquittal it was necessary to blacken the character of the woman. In rape cases there is often an underlying assumption that the woman has 'led the man on'. Some men believe that any rape victim 'is only getting what she asked for'. A couple of years ago a learned judge ruled that a rape victim had only herself to blame because she had been hitching a lift.

Christabel Boyce died, the court ruled, because she made unreasonable demands on her husband. The court did *not* say that it is acceptable to kill a nagging wife, but implicit in the decision was an assumption that one cannot be too surprised if a hen-pecked husband blows a short fuse. Poor chap, she must have led him a dog's life, was the obvious sentiment of the court.

My wife was Christabel's solicitor. She knew a sensible, compassionate woman, devoted to her children. A woman worried that her academically frustrated husband could not cope with the harsh reality of supporting a wife and two children. She was seeking a divorce, he was resisting it. The court chose to believe that she was a nag and a bully. Perhaps my wife got it wrong but since when has nagging constituted a defence for murder? Since last Wednesday.

Barry Hugill

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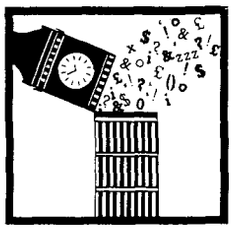

Coming shortly to a polling station near you: the 1960s show

AS LAST WEEK'S Conservative Party conference neared its end, one of Mrs Thatcher's wettest junior ministers could scarcely contain his delight. 'For the first time the Conference is more moderate than the party leadership', he said. His view was that, behind the unflinching rhetoric of monetarist rectitude, a new, more human, post-Thatcher Tory party is in the process of being conceived. I think he is right; and the consequences are profoundly important for the future of party competition in Britain.

Before we come to those consequences, let us look at the evidence. It first showed itself when Peter Walker replied to the energy debate. Mr Walker has set himself up as the enemy within — that is, Mrs Thatcher's enemy within the Cabinet. He presents himself as the defender of all that is most compassionate in 'one nation' Toryism. But when it comes to bashing Arthur Scargill and the miners, Mr Walker is as strident as they come. Compassion for the defeated mining communities? That's taking the concept of one nation just a trifle too far, don't you think?

In fact, Mr Walker judged the mood of the conference wrongly. A number of speakers talked of the need to heal the wounds of the strike, and of the need to respect the traditions of pit villages; and warm applause greeted each such reference. But Mr Walker's speech (like all others from ministers replying to debates) had been written and distributed in advance. Anticipating no such comments, he did not respond to them, instead preferring to prattle on about how narrowly Britain had been saved from the marxist menace. The activists reflected the mood of the public in a way the minister did not.

Or take the debate on race and immigration. Not so many years ago this would have been an occasion for some of the party's nastiest elements to do their amateur imitations of Sir Oswald Mosley. This year, the heroine of the debate was Mrs Lurling Champagne, a black nurse from Harrow, whose assertion that 'I am Conservative, black and British, and proud of all three' drew a standing ovation. Not so many years ago, Mrs Thatcher won cheap applause for complaining about people like Mrs Champagne 'swamping' Britain.

In the debate on industrial policy, a succession of northern Tories complained that not enough was being done to bridge the growing gap between North and South. Mr Edward Hay, from Makerfield, spoke for many in the conference hall when he said that 'a whole generation of young people in the North of England lack the prospects of their opposite numbers in the South; the social and economic consequences of this change are potentially catastrophic'.

The mood of the conference encouraged some ministers who are beginning to contemplate life after Thatcher to lay out their wares:

●David Waddington, Minister of State at the Home Office, attacked the proponents of voluntary repatriation in the clearest terms: not only would such a policy fail, he said, 'but in trying to implement it, the great majority of the ethnic minority population who would remain could be so alienated from the rest of the community that the chances of building one nation in which people of differing ethnic backgrounds could live in harmony together would be gone forever'.

●William Waldegrave, Minister for the Environment, appealed for the green vote. In talking about 'the quality of life', he said, 'we mean having the benefits of modern science without harming our air, our water or our wildlife'.

PETER KELLNER

●Even Sir Geoffrey Howe went as far as the government's woefully inadequate policies would allow to attack South Africa's system of apartheid — and was warmly applauded for doing so.

A NUMBER of responses can be made to all this. Much of it was cant. Most had been said before. It's a change of presentation, not of policy. And from time to time the masks did slip — such as when representatives booed a delegate who said the government was being too hard on the teachers.

Yet, for all the scepticism that should rightly be directed at a party that still lives in awe of Mrs Thatcher, the change in mood at Blackpool remains significant. It is not so much a question of party activists rejecting monetarism (fewer than ever turned up to hear Sir Ian Gilmour's familiar denunciation of the doctrine) as the growing realisation that social divisiveness practiced as government doctrine is a vote loser.

In many parts of the country — the North where the Tories now stand third, and the rural South, where normally safe county council seats crumbled to the Alliance in May — more and more Tories want their party to adapt to the attitudes of their lost supporters.

The mood has been captured by a series of Southeast constituency Tory discussion documents leaked recently to Cllr Steve Bassam, Labour's candidate for Brighton, Kemptown. For example, according to Wealden's constituency party,

> Theories, didactic policies, image mongering, sectarian philosophies may have their limited place but not at the expense of compassion, flexibility and understanding of the simple realities of human life.

I cannot seeing Mrs Thatcher meeting that mood. If the Conservatives lose the next election and Mrs Thatcher resigns the party leadership, the MPs that choose her successor are likely to pick someone who will respond to the party's new sensitivities. The heavier the defeat, the more decisive the break with Thatcherism is likely to be.

Unless a succession of hung Parliaments leads to electoral reform, the Liberal/SDP Alliance stands to lose most from this change. At the beginning of this autumn's conference season, four moderately clear political tendencies were visible, one for each party:

●**Committed left-wing**: the cluster of ideas that gave us Labour's 1983 manifesto, the miners' strike and Liverpool City Council.

●**Progressive, radical-democratic**: egalitarian but reformist rather than rigorously socialist.

●**Humane capitalist**: tough (on unions, nationalised industries and 'scroungers') and tender (on school children, NHS patients and the inner cities).

●**Thatcherite**: tough and tough.

Roughly speaking, the pre-conference public images of Labour, Liberal, SDP and Tory fitted each of those descriptions in turn. For a brief period, as in the autumn of 1981, the two tendencies that dominated British politics from 1945 to 1979 seemed to become the joint property of the Alliance parties.

During the past fortnight, however, both Labour and Conservative have moved to reclaim their traditional domain. In Labour's case the process was obvious and dramatic: it came in Neil Kinnock's attacks on Liverpool City Council and the leadership of the NUM. Of course Labour will still be portrayed — by the far Left as much as by Tory tabloids — as the party of Derek Hatton, Arthur Scargill and, now, Bernie Grant. But whether it answers to the cry of realism or class treachery, the Labour Party has been repossessed by its leader.

In the case of the Conservatives, the process is only just beginning — and it is starting from the bottom rather than the top. But I would wager that, five years from now, the Thatcher years will seem like an aberration from the benign years of cosy middle-class Toryism; once again the party will protect the interests of its own, without excessively alienating the interests of too many others.

At a Tory Reform Group fringe meeting in Blackpool, Andrew Neil, the editor of the *Sunday Times*, said the government should do more to attack the great middle-class rackets, such as the legal, medical and accountancy professions. Julian Critchley, who is so wet that he swims rather than marches behind the Conservative flag at election time, replied : 'Surely we have enough enemies without adding to them'. And so say many other Tories. For good or ill, old-style politics are due for a come-back. □

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Jane Bown/Observer

UPP

Camera Press

WE HAVE WAYS OF MAKING YOU DRINK FOSTERS

Press and TV are awash with Australian lager adverts as the battle between the big brewers on the other side of the world spills over into the UK market. ROGER PROTZ assesses the prospects for the consumer

THE SUSPENSEFUL £1.7 billion Australian bid for Allied-Lyons, the drink and foods conglomerate — further developments are due Monday — has brought to a head a long-simmering crisis in the British brewing industry. The bid for Allied — which produces such famous beer brands as Tetley, Ansells, Ind Coope and Skol — comes from Elders IXL, Australia's biggest brewer, most famous for its Fosters lager.

Elders is less than a quarter the size of Allied, but it has Citicorp, one of the world's biggest banks, behind it. Elders' boss, the pugnacious John Elliott, acquired Fosters in a similar 'reverse takeover' in 1983. His company now has 50 per cent of the Australian beer market, and, like Rupert Murdoch before him, he is forced to look abroad for further expansion.

Elliott is able to bid for companies bigger than his own because he can convince his bankers, that he can run them better and more profitably. He talks of Allied's ramshackle management structure, making much fun of Allied's 94 managing directors and its 'tired' products.

If Elliott's bid for Allied succeeds, the drive for profit will sharpen. Breweries would have to run at full capacity. At a time of falling beer consumption, this would mean closure and redundancies — and even greater emphasis on lager, which is more profitable than ale and for which the market is still expanding.

It is all ominously reminiscent of the string of takeovers launched by Canadian Eddie Taylor, the man with a mission to make us all drink Carling Black Label, which produced the huge Bass Charrington brewing combine in the 1960s.

THE DRAUGHT LAGER market is now worth nearly £20 billion a year. In less than two decades, lager has grown from 1 per cent to 33 per cent of the total beer market. Bulk lager costs a couple of pence per pint more than bitter to produce, but this is cancelled out by lower excise duty (levied according to alcoholic strength: the duty on a pint of Carlsberg is about 15½p compared with an average of 18p on bitter). Yet lager sells for up to 10p a pint more than bitter.

Part of the reason for the greater profit margin is advertising: lager drinkers tend to choose brands on image rather than taste. Courage's Hofmeister, for example, won increased sales not because young drinkers thought it was a better lager but because they identified with the 'streetwise' bear character in a £1.7 million TV advertising campaign in 1983. The brewers spent £20 million advertising the 10 heaviest-promoted lagers in 1984 — £5 million more than the top 10 beer brands.

Underpinning the headlong rush to brew more lager is the need to get what brewery marketing departments call more 'traffic' into pubs. Traffic means customers and customers can no longer be relied upon dutifully to trot down to the local every evening. Those in work have other demands on their leisure time and the attractions of home video, TV, fast food restaurants or wine bars may have more appeal than a basic boozer.

As a result £700 million a year is being spent on pub modernisation, with women and young people the target 'traffic'.

THE 'BIG SIX' brewers — Bass, Allied, Watney, Whitbread, Courage, and Scottish &

Top Left: Mr Dignified (Sir Derrick Holden-Brown of Allied-Lyons); right: Mr Brash (John Elliott of Elders IXL)

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Newcastle — are responsible for more than 90 per cent of lager production. And while take-home sales are lucrative, the easiest pickings can be made in the 'tied estate', the pubs directly owned by brewery companies.

It is the drive for more outlets for lager that has created the current crisis — a crisis that once again threatens both traditional beer and consumer choice.

If Elders succeeds in buying Allied, it will acquire 7,000 pubs and will flood them with Fosters lager — once it has taken the current Fosters franchise from Watney, which has only 4,700 pubs. The attempted takeover is given added interest by the fact that Allied has just launched Fosters' main Australian rival, Castlemaine XXXX, under licence.

Elders is unlikely to be interested in maintaining a full range of mild, bitter, stout, old ale and barley wine — they may still collectively outsell lager, but they don't have its profit potential. Yorkshire drinkers might rise in armed revolt if there were a threat to Tetley bitter, but the future for low-volume Allied beers must be precarious.

THE CAMPAIGN for Real Ale (CAMRA), which led the fight to stop the extinction of traditional beer in the 1970s and created a climate in which takeovers became difficult and unpopular, is sufficiently alarmed by the present situation to call an emergency conference in London this weekend.* The CAMRA conference, which will hear MPs, trade unionists, worried small brewers and City analysts, was convened before the Elders bid was known. The Campaign was already disturbed by recent events that have seen the extinction of several small breweries and a bid by Scottish & Newcastle Breweries (Younger and McEwan) for Matthew Brown of Blackburn that would give S&N a monopoly of pub ownership in parts of the North-West.

In the past year, Yates and Jackson of Lancaster has been bought and closed by Thwaites of Blackburn. Watney has closed its Norwich brewery and merged its Northern groups, Wilsons and Websters. Warrington's Greenall Whitley, the most predatory of the large regional brewers, which already owns Shipstone's of Nottingham and Wem of Shropshire, pounced on the Black Country brewery of Simpkiss in the summer. Simpkiss was closed overnight and its pubs were stocked with Wem products.

The logic of the market, though, is that the bigger you get the more tasty you become — as is shown by the case of Matthew Brown, which last year took over Theakston (the Yorkshire brewers of Old Peculier fame) and which is now under threat itself.

Scottish & Newcastle's £91 million bid for Matthew Brown has been referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission. City experts expect that S&N will be allowed to go ahead with the bid. If Brown's shareholders succumb, S&N will control 52 per cent of the pubs in Cumbria, a major stake in 62 per cent of the country's clubs and a sizeable foothold in Lancashire.

S&N believes in a 'tight product line'. It is not likely that it would continue with all the milds, bitters, old ales and lagers currently produced by Brown, Theakston and its own Edinburgh and Newcastle breweries. Cutbacks and rationalisation would lead inevitably to closure of some of the six breweries owned by S&N, Brown and Theakston. A successful S&N bid will mean fewer beers, fewer breweries, fewer brewery jobs and less choice for drinkers.

IN THE 1970s, CAMRA could embarrass brewers by the vigour of its devotion to traditional beer: if a brewery was threatened, the Campaign would stage a mock funeral and the cameras would dutifully point. Today, a jaundiced media no longer finds the Campaign interesting and its appeals fall largely on deaf ears. It has thrown itself with great energy and devotion into the battle to save Matthew Brown from the grip of S&N but success is far from guaranteed.

Faced by the muscle of the big brewers and their advertising agencies, CAMRA has a problem on its hands. It cannot reverse the lager trend — even that most revered of real ale breweries, Youngs of Wandsworth, is astonished by the demand for lager in its pubs.

CAMRA has shown that a consumer group with a sizeable membership and widespread support can defend and enrich the quality of a particular product. It can be rude, tough and abrasive and can force the big brewers temporarily to abandon some of their wilder dreams. But ultimately neither CAMRA nor any other consumer group can tackle fundamentally the structure of an industry and the drive for profit and concentration of ownership.

In spite of almost 15 years of spirited endeavour, CAMRA has done nothing to change the structure of British brewing — and nor can it be expected to. The Big Six still dominate the market.

Lasting choice and variety for drinkers can be ensured only by legislation to break up the brewing cartels — and such a break-up is the act of government, not of consumers.

One thing is clear at the the bottom of an otherwise murky beer glass: the present government, with its historic and financial links with the brewers, won't begin that process. □

Roger Protz is former editor of CAMRA's Good Beer Guide.

* Saturday 19 October, 11.30 am, Queen Mary College, Mile End Road, E1.

This England

£3 Book Tokens for entries printed. For the next few weeks, winners will also receive a Pet Hate effigy

□From a report in *The Daily Telegraph*: 'A helicopter pilot who got lost and dropped down to 15ft to ask a policeman the way was fined £300 at Plymouth yesterday for low and reckless flying'. — *Flight International* (W. Pugh)

□I can confirm the story of Lords McAlpine and Gowrie missing a division in the Lords and being thus upbraided by a Whip: 'I bet you were out guzzling oysters'. 'When the Whips,' retorted Lord McAlpine, 'learn you don't eat oysters in May we may get some legislation through'. — *Sunday Telegraph* (George Moor)

Whitehall had contacted all councils asking them to keep emergency centre staffs as small as possible because of a nationwide shortage of bunker space. — *Eastern Evening News* (Jean Clissold)

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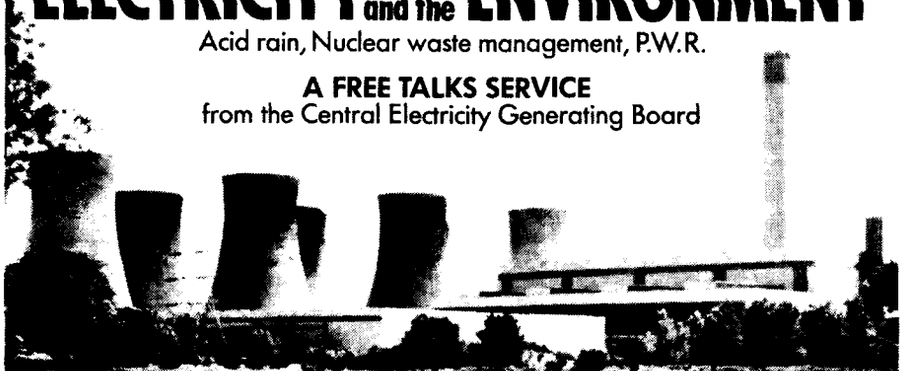

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CONTRADICATIONS THAT FREEZE BLACK LEADERSHIP

Where's the black leadership, the cry goes up when inner cities flare — but the real question, argues TONY SEWELL, is why do the leaders who *do* emerge lose touch with their people

THE CRY FOR LEADERS has been about the most united response to the recent inner-city riots. From Handsworth via Brixton to Tottenham the search for leadership, to bring reason to the rage of black youths, has been a common call.

However, since no Arthur has yet been able to pull the sword from the stone and proclaim himself (herself?) leader of the black community, serious questions must be asked as to how black leaders have become so out of touch with the aspirations of the black community.

After the riots in Notting Hill in 1958 Roy Jenkins as Home Secretary followed with the first Race Relations Act in 1965. The legislation was what could be called negative, unlike the positive discrimination that was undertaken in America. The act made it illegal to discriminate in housing and in 1968 in jobs, but of course discrimination was extremely difficult to prove. It was out of this climate that the first tentative steps were made by the black community to organise politically, in the form of 'The West Indian Standing Conference'. It was an organisation of black businessmen with race relations advisers; people like James Hunte, now a councillor in Birmingham, prominent in the aftermath of the Handsworth disturbance, and Lord Pitt began their early agitation through the conference.

In retrospect, although the conference did a lot of useful work, it did not address itself to the underlying problems that faced black people, viz. the problem of young black people with few or no qualifications and totally disaffected with an 'irrelevant' education system.

This early organisation was removed from the 'community' by a contradiction that still hampers black leadership today. It was a government initiative to create the Race Relations Act; and the Standing Conference became no better than the 1976 Commission for Racial Equality in that, as an institution, it had no real contact or representation with the black community. Like the CRE, it became associated with government policy. It was here that the so-called 'race relations industry' had its beginnings, jobs designed to fight racism but which had been created by government. In the end it was clearly seen by most of the young people who grew up unemployed and badly educated, that in fact the so-called leaders were part of the opposition.

This lack of leadership explains why what should have been a crisis of 'policing' turned into the so called problem of the 'inner-city black'. Onye Wambu, political correspondent of the *Voice*, explains: 'The issue of Mrs Groce's shooting became consumed by the general anger and the damage which ensued as a consequence of that anger. And then other issues which had no place in such genuine protest began to intrude. So we had the looting, we had the rapes, we had the thuggery. And the more of everything we had, the more poor Mrs Groce became a static figure, buried by wanton anger and at times sheer criminality.' Wambu criticises 'our politicians' for failing to stop 'the kids' throwing away the moral initiative. The Groce case was one in which the actions of the police could be exposed through 'their' courts.

It is in this context that the controversy that

BENJAMIN ZEPHANIAH
You Don't Riot

You don't riot if you have a nice job and a home to come home to at night
You just don't riot if you have a nice job and a home to come home to at night
You don't riot if you are well fed
And unemployment does not pressure your head
You don't riot if you live in the city
But you have a country cottage where the view is pretty
You don't riot you can have a holiday
You can afford to have plenty to say
You don't riot 'cause life is swell
With the media on your side as well
You don't riot if you can safely walk the streets in peace
You don't riot you have video games to let your anger release
You don't riot if what car to drive is the only problem you got
You don't riot if you have your share and by chance you have a lot
You say there's no such thing as a riot
You say it's purely crime
You say you're a moaning minnie
Don't riot, stay quiet
'Cause our country's doing fine
Our country's doing fine
We have a great army to protect you and me
Yes the country's doing fine
It's no U-turn time
Yes it's no U-turn time
Our lady rules no milk for schools
Yes the country's doing fine
Why do you riot when you get dole money
Although it's slightly taxed
You don't riot why should you riot
You're British and you're not black
You don't get riots on Hampstead Heath
Or even Handsworth Wood
So we don't riot
Golly, we don't riot we're very very good
You don't riot with a big bank account
With American Express you can always bail out
You don't riot you choose a better choice
Rolling around in a big Rolls-Royce
You don't riot, riots happen too late
And that's South Africa, Britain is Great
You don't riot that sounds like hatred
And our people never get f r u s - t r a - t e d

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surrounds Bernie Grant, the leader of Haringey Council, must be understood. He wants to have the 'street-cred' cake but he also wants to eat the success of being the first post-war black M.P. Contrary to the view that the West-Indian community 'has a history of bringing down those who seek to be leaders' (*Observer*, 13 October), it is the politicians who have removed themselves, unable to resolve the tension of their peculiar position. When Bernie Grant says 'the police were to blame for what happened, and what they got was a bloody good hiding', he is giving voice to a genuine grievance of young black people — and if it had been said by a community worker it would not have had the attention. However when Bernie Grant begins his Labour Party Black Section rhetoric he no longer carries the hearts and minds of the black community; he becomes Bernie Grant the political aspirant trying to clean the rusty Labour Party political machinery and leaving the black youths to hold onto their Molotov cocktails.

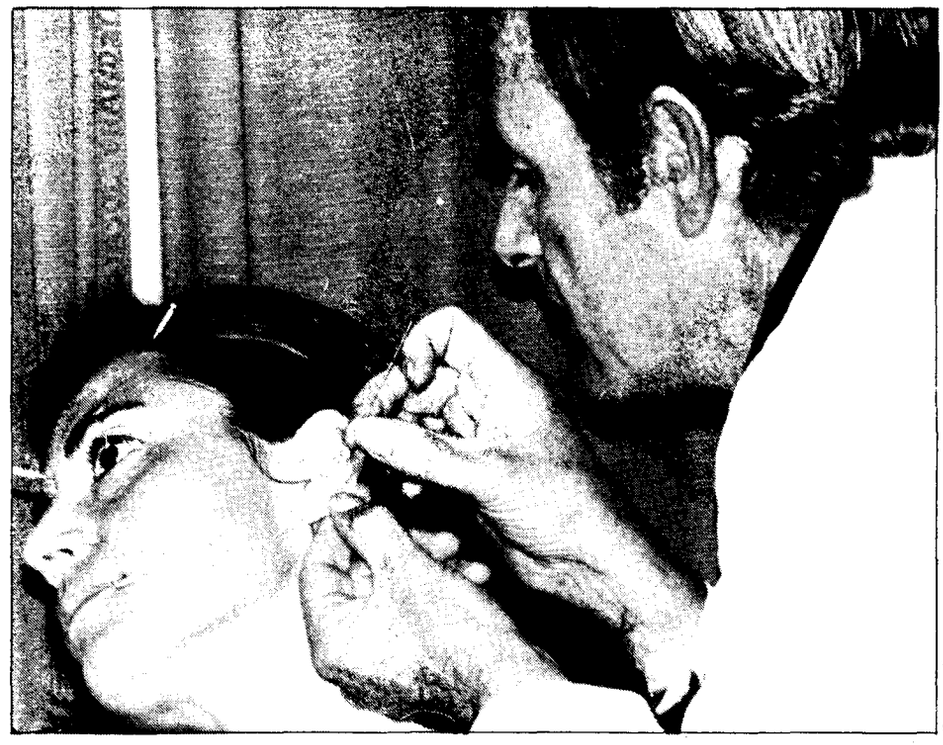
ANOTHER MISAPPREHENSION is that the King Arthur of the black community must come from the middle class. The argument then goes on to suggest that because there is no substantial black middle class in England then no leadership will emerge. According to Darcus Howe, a member of the Race Today Collective, Black Sections are really about 'the quest of a black professional middle class for power-sharing with its white counterpart.'

The best organised and richest group in the black community are the black churches, traditionally the rallying point for poor black spiritual needs. In contrast to disastrous white church decline the black churches are undergoing something of a revival. No one can accuse them of being middle class, particularly the pentecostal churches which draw their support from poor black people.

What has this to do with the unemployed black youth on Broadwater Farm seeking excitement, profit and power? The Church is not politically handicapped like many black politicians (the Church serves only one Master). In America the Church managed to cross over into the political and identified itself with the needs of the people — the result was Martin Luther King. When the black church leaders come together with black community leaders, then honest brokers will emerge. The union will free black politicans from their tight-rope between what one writer has called the respectability of conventional party politics and the hero-worship of community activism.

What the black churches can bring to the issue of leadership is the ability to organise independently. It is a quality not alien to the historic struggles of black people and has had proven success. In America the reality of segregation meant that there was no choice but to organise independently. But any new leadership will have to talk with Rastafarians and see the important need for the young people to be given the true positive story of their history. As well as taking on the important task of negotiating with the government to put back the economic infrastructure under the feet of black people so that they can truly help themselves. □

Tony Sewell is features editor of the Voice *newspaper, one of Britain's flourishing black weeklies.*



Camera Press

COLD TURKEY

PUNCTURING OLD HABITS

IAN WILLIAMS visits an experiment in using acupuncture to get people off hard drug addiction

SINCE THE MYSTERIOUS EAST has always been associated in popular imagination with drugs and dealers, it's ironically appropriate that the same hemisphere has inspired a treatment for addiction. A group in Liverpool is now trying acupuncture to treat drug addiction, with encouraging results.

Current theory on addiction derives from the discovery of opiates, 'endorphins', which the body produces to 'fine-tune' the nervous system, so that (for example) normal feelings don't overload into pain messages to the brain. Continual use of artificial opiates, like heroin, morphine, or indeed opium itself, suppresses the body's normal production of the endorphins, so that coming off them leads to a sensory overload — Cold Turkey, withdrawal symptoms. After continual usage, the body needs the artificial substances just to maintain a semblance of normality.

But acupuncture has been proved to stimulate endorphin production, which provides a clue perhaps for its use in pain relief and even for surgical anaesthesia in China. So, for drug users wanting to break their addiction, acupuncture stimulation of the natural endorphin system should be able to mitigate the withdrawal symptoms, and bring pain/sensory perception back to stability. The programme of treatment in Liverpool is believed to be the first attempt in Britain to test the theory in practice. It is being run by the Society for Biophysical Medicine, which brings together practitioners from several fields with an interest in acupuncture. Within a short time patients have flooded in, mostly recruited by word of mouth — and all willing to try anything to break the habit.

After several weeks all but one of the clients has maintained treatment, and all have drastically reduced their drug use. The usual addiction therapy involves, ironically, addiction to another drug, methadone. This is, puritanically, far less euphoric in effect than heroin — but more addictive. Many of the people I spoke to at the clinic were using methadone and topping it up with heroin, and all most of them had to show for 'methadone therapy' was further addiction. One man had in fact been on methadone for four years, and was driven to seek treatment 'Because my lad's turned seven now, and he's just started making the connexion between the news stories about addicts, and me and the needles'. Apart from a long train journey to get to the clinic, he was paying a heavy price for his decision to stop the methadone completely. 'I've been behavin' as if I had St Vitus' Dance' he said, claiming that he was much better now after a few days of the acupuncture treatment, and that he could at least sleep!

His fellow clients were also almost all methadone addicted, relics of failure with the official treatment. Everyone who had been involved was scathing about the drug clinics, where someone who was late for an appointment could be turned away and told to 'get what you need from whoever you usually buy it off'. The motley crew ranged from a 16 year-old girl with *four years* addiction behind her, to retired hippies with fifteen years. Some smoked, some snorted it, some injected it, and some did all three. All wanted off. Most of them freely admitted that they financed their habit from theft, and added that they had to get out of Liverpool to go shoplifting as the pickings were now slimmer in the centre. One had blown £3,000 redundancy pay in six weeks, before

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robbing, but was virtuously adamant that he only stole off those who could afford it!

EVERY ONE of them reported that the acupuncture treatment, involving electrical stimulation of points on the ear and legs was in, young Judy's words, 'dead relaxing', and all of them claimed to be much more 'alert' since the course started. As they reduced their dosage, the common reaction was that it was as if they were emerging from a daze, becoming aware of the world, and thinking about the future beyond the next jag. Normally reduction of dosage would be accompanied by what they call the 'withdrawals', the Cold Turkey, but the treatment avoided that.

What it didn't treat was the future. And all of them were realistic about how grim that was. Ian Ward-Baskin, one of the prime movers behind the course, was prepared to admit that he and his colleagues hadn't got that end sorted out. What do you do when you emerge from your opiate spun cocoon into the very reality which drove you there to start with?

The clients are filled with proselytising zeal, and want to help spread the treatment, but there is an inherent pyramid-selling instability to such a structure, epitomised by one of the more cynical long-time users, who, admitting that the treatment was being more successful than any other he'd tried, still wryly reckoned that the only completely successful rehabilitees he'd ever seen were the ones working in — rehabilitation! Alan Parry, the drugs advisor for the Regional Health Authority, reserves judgement on the success of the treatment. He feels, contrary to the addicts I spoke to at the clinic, that the big problem isn't withdrawal, but 'What do we do now?' after finishing. He points out the huge number of heroin users among the GIs, who, when they returned to normality from the hell of Vietnam, overwhelmingly stopped without great difficulty. He stresses that addicts should feel a sense of involvement and achievement in their own cure, not just 'have things *done* to them'.

Indeed the pioneer acupuncture patients do feel a degree of involvement, which later patients may not. But also they come daily for the acupuncture treatment, and relax and chat in an informal, non-clinical atmosphere while young Judy's mother makes the coffee and tea. It is a far cry from a weekly brief visit to put a sample bottle in and get a methadone prescription out at one of the more orthodox clinics. Wouldn't a success for the experiment lead to its expansion in a way which would imply just such an institutionalisation? They weren't at all sure, but it was working now, and the emphasis both from patients and the volunteer practitioners was to spread it as fast as possible.

Yet another plus in these Thatcherite Days is that the treatment is amazingly economical. The only material costs are the disposable acupuncture needles, and several clients can be treated simultaneously. In an area with large waiting lists for traditional expensive treatment, there are great possibilities for treatment of the addiction. Unfortunately even acupuncture's most fervent admirers and supporters make no claims for its effectiveness against the terminal social afflictions besetting an area like Merseyside. If you prick them, they do not *really* bleed, is the message from the Treasury Benches. □

PEACE MOVEMENT

CALLS FOR A WIDER VISION

JANE DIBBLIN sees signs — but still too few — that CND is lifting its eyes from 'Eurocentricity'

IN 1983 when I returned from the first European peace movement delegation to Nicaragua, I was greeted with some considerable hostility by several people in leadership positions in the peace movement. 'What has Nicaragua got to do with peace?', they asked.

Since then, over the last two years, a real shift seems to have been taking place in the political direction of the British peace movement, marked by a conference last Saturday (12 October) in Birmingham on 'Third World War'. Organised by European Nuclear Disarmament (END), Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) and the Nicaragua and El Salvador Solidarity Campaigns, working in coalition for the first time, it drew 200 delegates, mostly from local CND groups.

Gradually, CND has been realising that it is time to stop focusing exclusively on a possible future war in Europe and the new generation of nuclear missiles and look also at what is happening now in the Third World. When I went round local groups talking on Nicaragua after my return in 1983 I found a growing receptiveness. The independently organised women's peace movement has been changing too, with Greenham women organising e.g. a nuclear-free and independent Pacific campaign. Magazines like END's *Journal* and CND's *Sanity* have started carrying articles on Central America. Yet somehow the subject has failed to reach the national agenda of CND, to acquire the sense of urgency it needs if it is to be given any priority in terms of resources. CND's international committee still only receives a paltry three per cent of the overall budget, and most of that is spent on European links.

There are two main reasons for this. One is the racism and Eurocentrism of the movement, which is reflected not only in its sluggishness about looking outside Europe, but in its failure to build coalitions with Britain's black community. The two need to go hand in hand — and involve listening to black and Third World people's agenda, not simply trying to enlist them to give credibility to a white-dominated movement.

The second stumbling block — particularly for CND — is the fear of losing the momentum of a single issue campaign. However, Meg Beresford, CND's general secretary, argued as opening speaker at Saturday's conference, that though CND should remain single issue, it should develop a broader perspective. There is no need, she said, for the campaign to become dissipated; there are clear links to be made which fall within existing aims.

That the movement should campaign around the nuclear cycle as a whole is relatively uncontroversial — though it is only relatively recently that it has begun to take up uranium mining in Namibia, which is under South African occupation, or testing in the Pacific, also under neo-colonial rule. What still needs discussion — and was only touched on by the conference — is the strategic and political link between 'local' conflict and global war, known in the US as 'the deadly connection'. While the superpowers edge warily round each other nose to nose in Europe, playing games of bluff and double bluff, it is in the Third World where they are playing out their conflict, where countless lives are now being lost in wars fuelled by highly profitable arms sales.

THE SAME IDEOLOGICAL smokescreen — that of the Cold War — is used to suppress dissident factions and national liberation movements in both blocs, to justify the nuclear build-up and to justify superpower intervention in the Third World: the US in Nicaragua, or the Soviets in Afghanistan. At the same time, there is mounting evidence that it is in the Third World where a nuclear conflagration could be sparked off, a fact admitted by successive US foreign policy makers. The US has threatened or prepared to use nuclear weapons against a Third World nation at least 11 times.

One of the most sinister developments in US policy is its Rapid Deployment Force (RDF), designed to go anywhere in the world as a trip-wire to warn the enemy that a certain country is vital to US interests and it is willing to use nuclear force if necessary. There is a network of RDF bases around the world: in Turkey, Diego Garcia (Indian Ocean), in Oman, Egypt, Kenya and Somalia. At the same time, the 'firebreak' between conventional and nuclear weapons is disappearing, and US military planners are seriously considering the use of nuclear weapons as fighting, battlefield options.

In some ways the turnout for Saturday's conference was disappointing. The organisers had been hoping for 300 people, nearly double the reality. Noticeably absent were many of the movement's 'stars', including all the candidates for CND's forthcoming election for chair. Although this reinforced the feeling that the subject still isn't taken seriously, it also gave the grassroots delegates a space to air their views; many came from groups which are already, in a piecemeal way, taking on board connections with the Third World.

What the conference did reveal was a well of energy and enthusiasm — Essop Pahad, the ANC representative, was given a standing ovation for his appeal to the peace movement to 'lessen the burden' on the South African black population — fettered by a feeling of frustration at not being able to get the peace movement to change gear. At the forthcoming CND national conference (16 November) only one debate out of seven -- on disarmament and development — will touch the Third World.

Delegates' frustration in Birmingham last weekend was tinged by a sense that unless the movement gets to grips with a more global vision, rather than being stuck on technology deployed in Europe, then the vast commitment the campaign has managed to mobilise will be wasted. □

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MEDIA

Rocky ride from Fleet St to Tottenham

PAUL FOOT

THE LIBYANS did it. It is obvious when you come to think of it. Ever since the *Sunday Times*, in an award-winning scoop, had ripped the veil off the Scargill-Gadafy connection, it was plain that the people responsible for the Tottenham riots could be found in Tripoli.

There was keen competition to print the proof. The *Daily Express* won. On Tuesday night last week, over the 'anti-violence' headline 'KILL! KILL! KILL!', the paper revealed that: 'Moscow-trained hit squad gave orders as mob hacked PC Blakelock to death'.

The article delved deeper. 'Street-fighting experts trained in Moscow and in Libya were behind Britain's worst violence'. Proof of this was rather hard to find, but later on the article (by-lined Peter Kent, Owen Summers and Don Coolican) had this:

> Special Branch has drawn up a list of known activists who have been under observation for four years in London, Birmingham and Liverpool.
>
> Now police are trying to track them down. They include men and women from Commonwealth countries like Jamaica, Barbados and Nigeria who have been trained in Russia and Libya in street revolutionary tactics.
>
> Some have been lying low under the umbrella of outwardly innocent racial pressure groups in London.

What profound relief these revelations must have brought to the comfortable suburbia where the *Daily Express* sells well! When people riot in the streets, there is always a nasty suspicion that they may have cause.

Few *Express* readers see the *Observer* on Sundays — and that's lucky for them as well. Last Sunday, Peter Hillmore revealed in his Pendennis column that Rocky Ryan had been at work.

This Ryan is invaluable. He gets his kicks from hoaxing Fleet Street journalists. I have been a victim of his myself, so I know he works hard at it. His speciality is knowing what journalists and editors want to believe — and then 'revealing' it to them.

The more they want Ryan's 'news', the easier it is to dupe them with it. The 'Libyan connection' in Tottenham was one of his specials. Judging from the article, he had no need to offer his suckers a single verifiable fact. Just the rumour (plus guaranteed freedom from libel) was enough to convince the *Daily Express* to print on its front page under an inflammatory headline and the names of three of its more prestigious reporters a pack of glorious lies.

How was Rocky so successful? It was not just that the *Express* hungered for the news. It was also that the coverage of life in Britain by the *Express* and all the other popular papers tells us so few facts that those who depend on the media for news are quite unprepared for a social explosion.

The fantasy is worse in the popular papers of course, but it is encouraged in the 'qualities' as well. A striking example comes again from the back page (or one of the interminable series of back pages) of the *Observer*. On 28 April this year, Michael Davie wrote a fine article about the new slums of Southwark. He walked round them with Alice Coleman of Kings College London, a consistent opponent of concrete pigsties built to house the working class of the 1960s and 1970s (in the 1980s, they have stopped *all* building for the working class — even pigsties).

Michael Davie's article was an attack not just on the architects and planners but on the Thatcher government and its then housing Minister, Thatcher's solicitor Ian Gow, for doing nothing.

The following week (5 May), Michael Davie came back to the same subject. His indignation had been tempered. On the day after his 28 April article, he had been invited to tour another estate in the company of a top civil servant from the Department of the Environment.

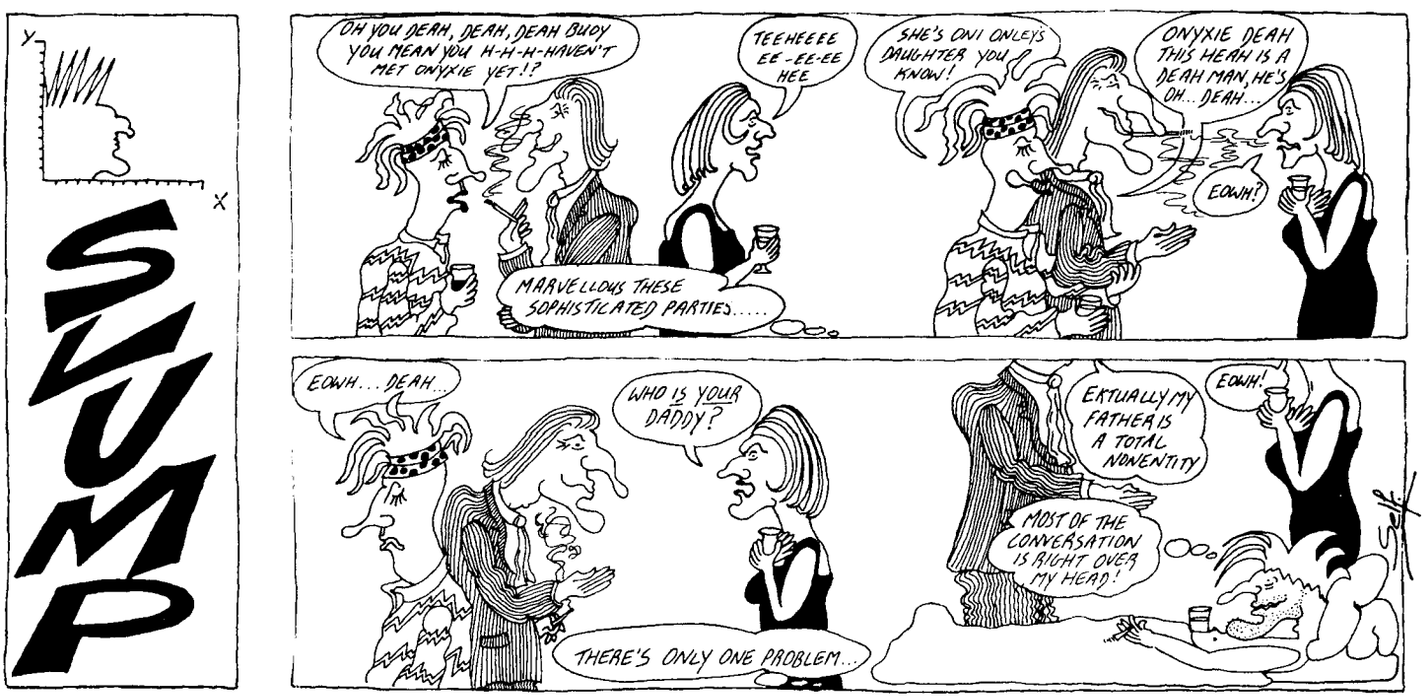
The estate which the Department chose to show off to Michael Davie was Broadwater Farm. 'The reason I, without asking, was taken on a tour of the 13-year-old Broadwater estate (1,063 dwellings, 2,800 people) is that the Department is proud of the way its Priority Estates Project is working,' wrote Michael Davie.

'All concerned have reason to be proud. Unlike the Southwark monsters I toured earlier, Broadwater Farm, despite its unlovely aspect, at once shows signs of being cared for — signs of affection even. Yet, till recently, it was almost a no-go area for the police.'

On and on this goes ('it has an air of youthful, relaxed, enthusiastic, multiracial bustle') in language which must have delighted the DoE public relations people, but which hardly reflected the desperate distress which the *Observer*, for instance, exposed at Broadwater Farm in the week *after* the riots. Even a writer who *did* bother to go out, to see things and to complain could be effectively buttoned up.

One question does not get an answer. It came on television from a young Rastafarian in Handsworth just after the riots there. The comfortable interviewer was raking him with searching questions about murder, violence, rapine, agitators, training in Moscow and General Gadafy.

The young man stood his ground and asked: 'If it hadn't been for the riots, would you be talking to me at all?' □


SUMP
OH YOU DEAH, DEAH, DEAH BUOY YOU MEAN YOU H-H-H-HAVEN'T MET ONYXIE YET!?
TEEHEEEE EE-EE-EE HEE
MARVELLOUS THESE SOPHISTICATED PARTIES.....
SHE'S ONI ONLEY'S DAUGHTER YOU KNOW!
ONYXIE DEAH THIS HEAH IS A DEAH MAN, HE'S OH... DEAH...
EOWH?
EOWH... DEAH...
WHO IS YOUR DADDY?
THERE'S ONLY ONE PROBLEM...
ERTUALLY MY FATHER IS A TOTAL NONENTITY
MOST OF THE CONVERSATION IS RIGHT OVER MY HEAD!
EOWH!

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DIARY

I had to miss the Labour Party conference because I'm on night duty, with the baby teething. So I contemplated the events of the last few weeks from a darkened room during the small hours (surrounded by the odour of *Bonjella*). 'Which is the greater miracle?', I asked myself. That Labour has retained some electoral credibility or that so many Mexican babies survived the earthquake? *The tinier the tougher*: a rule that does not apply to political parties. I remember my particular surprise and delight (the trepidation followed only later) with our first child, when I realised that though diminutive it was 100 per cent will-power. Small babies are utterly dedicated to survival, and therefore to getting bigger, at whatever cost to those around them. As I write these words I rub my eyes — and not because of the strain of a VDU. Some would argue that this is fashionable anti-child sentiment; I just think it's a fact that it's the parents who are at risk more than the infant when one gets into the family way.

○

Which brings me to Sara Keays — I'll come back to the Labour Party — and Cecil Parkinson. Their relationship lasted 12 years which is longer than many marriages, so the scandal is not at all one of 'kiss and tell'. I sense a definite masculine conspiracy in that attitude. It is a matter of double standards which were, for once, exploded. Or rather, torpedoed by nothing less than Britain's class system, which for once deserves half a cheer. What sort of sex people have and their choice of *ménage* is up to them: everyone, including public figures, has the right to privacy. But the Parkinson/Keays scandal is about dishonesty in high places, not sex, and ministerial double-double standards: he attempted to get her to agree to pledge silence, which would then make it look as if *she* had acted shamefully.

○

Keays also wanted her own political career and has the courageous sense of timing that would have made her a valuable politician. She was going to be the Tory candidate in the Bermondsey by-election, only for Cecil the Party Chairman to shoot her down behind her back . . . A pity. A Tory paramour would have given some light relief to the odious pillory of Peter Tatchell for being an Aussie gay. Despite this setback Keays still wouldn't keep to her 'place'. Parkinson knew that she believed paternity and marriage would be the outcome. But when the baby came along, he found he couldn't abort that as easily as Keays's parliamentary career. Why not? Because of good old British class. In the old days the Tory MP would have been an elite figure and his secretary the striving, upwardly mobile careerist. This time, thanks to Thatcherism, it was the other way round. The *arriviste* grammar school boy Parkinson enjoyed the adoration of well-born daughter from the shires. The *Sun* was good on Sara's 'True Blue family of landed gentry'. Indeed, in one of *The Mirror's* extracts Keays goes on about how she demanded Parkinson pay for her to have the baby, and how, only shortly before it was due, he

> confirmed he would pay for the cost of my confinement. At least I could go ahead with the arrangements for the birth of my baby, knowing that I would be able to pay the bills.

A revealing glimpse, this, of a way of life where it does not cross one's mind to have a baby with the NHS. So it was foolish of Parkinson to try and treat Keays like an upstart floozie. I wonder how many secretaries who've been pressured into having abortions thought: 'If only my dad had been a colonel'.

○

Funny, isn't it, but I don't really want to write about the Labour Party. Perhaps this is because my reaction at the end of the Conference was to share the positive feeling for David Blunkett. So far as Kinnock versus Militant is concerned, I say, quoting from Matthew: 'If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch'. Where does that leave Blunkett? He demonstrated a commanding sense of . . . could it be vision? Kinnock's undoubted triumph leaves me cold. First, because I always had the 'courage' to say the miners should ballot — but that's because I

ROGER WODDIS

A tale told by an idiot

'To borrow and to borrow and to borrow is not Macbeth with a heavy cold. It is Labour Party policy'. — Mrs Thatcher at Blackpool

Isn't it nice to know, children?
Isn't it nice to know
That however dark the day appears,
With failure falling about our ears
And Peter Walker in floods of tears,
There's always a hack in tow?

I have these clowns who write my speeches
And got me to quote Macbeth.
Thank goodness nobody understands
I'm twice as thick as the desert sands
And when they failed to clap their hands
I practically died a death.

Let me tell you the truth, children:
Mummy's run out of steam.
She's a broken wheel that'll never mend
(Some even suggest that I'm round the bend);
I only hope as I face the end
It's all been a nasty dream.

We can always cope with devious sods,
But as Friedrich von Schiller made plain:
Against stupidity the very gods
Struggle and strive in vain.

wanted them to win as well as fight. Second, because of the way the Left has handed 'reality' to the Right. Kinnock's was a victory for Labour's conservatism.

○

As for Thatcher, she apparently believes that women necessarily think in the much longer term, not just this week or next, but getting the children into school and then into their careers and so forth, perhaps giving them a helping hand, in Oman or wherever . . . I take this from the birthday audience with the Prime Minister in *The Mail on Sunday*. It was of the hard hitting sort — Gosh you are only 60, will you still be our premier in the year 2,000 if we're good? Its conclusion, I quote for real:

> So however we see Mrs Thatcher, we know now how she sees herself — as Mother Britain. And mothers always say they know best.

There's a nudge there to tell us we should not be too impressed. But the notion that Thatcher wants to be seen as the Mother of the Nation is hardly the *Mail*'s discovery. I spotted it exactly a year ago, along with 'operation apparent compassion' and I predicted also that it won't catch on.

○

Not that Thatcher is old as political leaders go — her voice could drone out at us for years as PM. Yet the comparative youthfulness that is really going to put others on the spot is the competition between Russia and China for getting young men into power. Gorbachev has levered out the octogenarian Tikhanov as the head of the Soviet economy and Russia after lagging badly moves one step ahead. Rajiv Gandhi may have become Premier of India by accident of assassination, but there too a new generation is on the wing. It's ironic that the two 'old' countries of the world today are the United States and Vietnam. In Hanoi especially the wheeze of Father Time must be deafening.

Islander

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Camera Press

Michel Rocard — revived from the political dead

SOON—LE CRUNCH

DAVID BELL went to the French Socialists' conference and found another government party with 'image problems'— and more besides

SINCE ITS ELECTION in 1981, the French Socialist government has ridden out the recession: growth has been the highest in Europe (4.6 per cent), inflation has come down and this year will be under 5 per cent, and unemployment, while it has not dropped, is lower than the EEC average.

Yet all the pollsters predict a tanning for the Party in next year's legislative elections. French Socialist problems are indeed what Mr Tebbit could justifiably call 'presentational'.

Four years of government form one part of the background to the Party's Congress held in Toulouse last weekend. Every two years this 'sovereign' body meets to discuss and, if possible, to 'composite' motions presented to party activists in the preceding months. Motions are long, philosophical — unreadable — documents, supposed to be the basis both for future policy and for electing the 'parliament' of the Party (the Directing Committee), which in turn elects the leadership. So debates about obscure points of doctrine often conceal a Namierite reality.

In order not to rock the boat, the Party leadership tried to present a united front after 1981. The Party gave its backing to President Mitterrand, but the play of self-interested political intrigue has been given a kick-start by the need to find a presidential candidate for 1988.

Until the Greenpeace affair, which weakened the Prime Minister, Laurent Fabius was the obvious dauphin, but there was also a quarrel between Lionel Jospin, the party leader, and the head of government about who should be in charge of the 1986 election campaign. Although the quarrel within the Mitterrand camp was resolved (and did not re-surface in Toulouse), there are still difficulties within the Party (notably in the organisation) and a whole new dimension to party conflict has been created by the revival of Michel Rocard from the political dead. Rocard, the sweetheart of the opinion polls, was expected to garner about 19 per cent for a separate 'Rocardist' motion. His vote in the end came to 28.5 per cent.

Rocard made a disruptive but ineffective presidential challenge in 1980, but it was his recent surprise surge which gave this Congress its excitement. The seriously canvassed possibility of a Rocard split, though, was removed because Rocard now still hopes to get the Party's official nomination as candidate.

Despite its advanced billing as a 'High Noon', the first day of the Congress last Friday was somewhat flat. Lionel Jospin, as First Secretary, set out the majority stall and began with the pitch for 'unity'. All subsequent speakers reiterated the need for a 'composite' statement.

But Jospin also replied to the criticisms from Rocard's supporters before the Congress: the government's dash-for growth of 1981-83 was defended, as was the Socialist record. (You cannot spit on your own past.) Jospin obliquely accused Rocard of making *oeillades* at the Right and, to cheers, declared 'the Party will not become a mere support force for the Right as long as I am the First Secretary'. Also, stealing some of Rocard's thunder, Jospin tried to appropriate the themes of modernisation and change.

Rocard, on behalf on the 'minority' motion, failed to bring any heat to the debate in a hesitant and unclear speech, which gave supporters little to cheer (though they confected a standing ovation in any case). Rocard did repeat criticisms of the government, noting that France's increased debts prevented an attack on unemployment and, along standard lines, criticised the Party for having one kind of talk in opposition and another in power.

THE QUALITY PERFORMANCE came the following day. Prime Minister Fabius, using every rhetorical trick, had delegates applauding from the outset by praising the new governments of Argentina and Brazil and Nelson Mandela. It also fell to Fabius to dispose of the idea of left unity with a Communist Party which has become 'a machine for scoring own goals', but the call for Socialist Party unity in the election campaign roused delegates. Fabius said that the 1981 elections, too, had been considered lost in advance, but 'then look what happened'. He called on Party archons by name (Pierre, Michel, Lionel, Jean-Pierre) to rally round — 'We need you all'.

Fabius defended the Socialist achievements, took a swipe at Rocard and then outlined the themes for the elections — employment, Europe (an investment programme), development, democracy and liberty. This was a speech which confirmed Fabius's stature and the Prime Minister's status as front runner for the 1988 Presidential nomination (if Mitterrand himself does not stand again).

The other rousing speech on Saturday came from the self-effacing Justice Minister, Robert Badinter, who is responsible for law reform. Reminding the Congress of the draconian laws (including stop and search) enforced by the last government, Badinter managed to symbolise the Party's commitment to justice and equality. It was an emotional speech.

Rocard, Jospin, Mauroy, Fabius and Mitterrand had all called for unity and, after a steamy meeting, a 'composite' was eventually produced at 6.45 on Sunday morning. In reality, the leadership ceded little ground to Rocard: no more places on the party 'lists' for the election (but more for the regional elections). The composite motion made no criticisms of the record of 1981-83; and the contentious 24th amendment — on future alliances — was smothered in a billowy thesis about a 'contract' between parties. ▷

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'There are', Rocard is reported to have remarked, 'some odd things in that [composite]' and on Sunday many of the questions, and particularly the nature of the 'contract' for alliances after 1986, were reopened. Rocard praised the 'cultural change' the Party has undergone, though this was accompanied by a comment about the danger of rejecting dogma only to embrace a visionless pragmatism.

Rocard, in other words, has put aside such 'childish' ideas as the 'break with capitalism' and has begun to stake out the ground for a new version of ('Rocardist') Socialism. This new element is something which could cause the leadership difficulties in negotiating the Party's election platform in mid-November and Jospin, in the final speech, did not let the shot pass. For one thing it almost wrecked the composite. Jospin then went on to rouse the Congress with entertaining attacks on the opposition (Barre — the barometer permanently registering high self-satisfaction; Chirac — the weathervane; and the Communist leaders — the greatest of the anti-Communists). The composite was finally accepted unanimously.

A number of points emerge from this Congress. The first is that the Party is still Mitterrand's party, although the President's grip is not as tight as it was. What, however, has been called, overstating it a bit, an 'opposition mentality' is still a feature of Socialist politics.

Second, Rocard's view of what the Party's programme should be is a minority. Rocard's 28.5 per cent support could be increased, especially if Fabius falters, but it is a proportion which carried no weight against a leadership which is not indulgent to the minority. If, by any chance, Rocard did get the presidential nomination it could be divisive.

Finally, everyone now agrees that the fight is on to win the 1986 Assembly elections. The whole structure of Presidential power will rest on the outcome of these elections, because if Mitterrand is faced with a conservative-dominated Assembly his executive power evaporates. (If he were faced with a 'hung parliament' on the other hand, there might be possibilities for Presidential manoeuvre, though).

But when it comes to a campaign of persuasion, as one commentator has remarked, it is one thing to speak in the warm fraternal atmosphere of a Socialist Congress, another to get your view across to the voters outside. □

David Bell is Lecturer in Politics at Leeds University.

THE SECRET DOCTRINE

There is a tradition of an Ancient Wisdom relevant, however, to any age and people. It tells of the eternal verities of existence, of Universal processes and laws which are of the nature of Nature herself — of whom we are all part.

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APARTHEID

HOWE IS SET FOR HAMMERING

African states will squeeze Britain where it hurts over South African sanctions, predicts SUZANNE CRONJE

SIR GEOFFREY HOWE'S publishing of the government's 'reasoned attitude' to sanctions against South Africa on the eve of the Commonwealth summit in Nassau was the first public move in the main contest between Britain and almost all the rest.

The statement evoked some hilarity among Commonwealth diplomats. 'We do not trade in arms with South Africa', the Foreign Secretary wrote. 'What about Plessey? What about Optica?' it was asked. The Plessey £48 million air defence system sold to South Africa had dual military and civil capabilities, the Foreign Office admits, but there was no evidence that Pretoria had actually used the equipment for military purposes. The Optica surveillance aircraft were officially said not to require a licence in accordance with the UN arms embargo, if they were not fitted with communications equipment.

'We do not export oil', Sir Geoffrey said. A Nigerian official preparing to leave for the Bahamas patted his attache case and smiled; 'Really? This comes as a surprise'. The new government in Nigeria is prepared to use evidence which has been available for some time to demonstrate to Mrs Thatcher that British oil *does* make its way to South Africa, if not directly then with the knowledge of British firms.

North Sea oil is being carried by British tankers to the Cape, according to African sources. In 1979, when a BP tanker used a Nigerian port on its way to a South African destination, its Nigerian assets were nationalised by the government in Lagos. The policy under which this move was made was drawn up with the help of Professor Bola Akinyemi, then head of the Nigerian Institute for International Affairs. Today he is Nigeria's Foreign Minister.

Nigeria has more economic clout as far as Britain is concerned than any other African state, possibly even South Africa, considering the recent nose dive in Pretoria's risk rating. Despite the severe austerity measures into which Nigeria has been forced by the international oil glut, its imports from Britain last year were still worth £768 million.

It is Africa's most populous state and most important market. The Nigerian delegation in Nassau will not have to underline this fact. But Nigeria is not acting alone. A high level delegation, led by the new Nigerian Minister for Special Duties, Air Vice-Marshal Shakari, went to the frontline states last month to discuss joint action, both on a Commonwealth level and within the Organisation of African Unity.

For the first time, Africa is preparing to co-ordinate action between the moderate francophone countries and the anglophone Commonwealth states. President Diouf of Senegal — the 1985-86 chairman of the OAU — deliberately chose the run-up to the Commonwealth summit for the first visit ever by a francophone head of state to South Africa's neighbours with the express purpose of demonstrating solidarity with them in the face of Pretoria's policy of destabilisation and aggression.

Mrs Thatcher will have the support of Malawi and Swaziland in her resistance to concerted Commonwealth sanctions. Malawi is the only independent African country to have established formal diplomatic relations with Pretoria, and in recent years Swaziland's government has become increasingly identified with South Africa. This is partly the result of the threats which Pretoria has been making against its neighbours, should they support the African National Congress (ANC), the main liberation movement, which is outlawed in South Africa itself. Moreover, South Africa's other neighbours are aware of the damage their economies might sustain, should Pretoria carry out its threat to retaliate against them, if its own economy comes under pressure from sanctions. They are all largely dependent on an infrastructure controlled by South Africa, particularly as far as transport is concerned.

THIS IS THE other side of the coin of the South African-sponsored argument, repeated again by Sir Geoffrey, that sanctions would rebound on neighbouring economies. South African manufacturing industry is indeed geared specifically to produce for southern African markets. The overseas exports of South Africa consist of minerals and other primary products, not manufactured goods.

A recent study by Joseph Hanlon estimates South Africa's earnings from trade and transport with its neighbours at $1,000 million a year. This must be weighed against the estimated price of sanctions to the rest of the sub-region of $2,000 million in the first year, although this sum could be expected to decrease in subsequent years.

The assumption that Pretoria would retaliate in the event of sanctions has dominated thinking on the issue to such an extent that it comes almost as a surprise when South Africa's principal business publication, the *Financial Mail*, publishes an article seriously questioning the likelihood of retaliation. However, the frontline states themselves have made contingency plans and announced that they will rely on international support to help get them over the crisis. President Nyerere of Tanzania has argued in favour of compensation from South Africa's main trading partners. The argument is that foreign investment in South Africa has underwritten the apartheid system which is such a potential threat to peace; an argument which Britain, predictably, will have no truck with.

'British companies have created jobs for more than 100,000 black workers in South Africa', Sir Geoffrey is telling his Commonwealth colleagues this week, forgetting to mention the starvation wages paid by many of them, despite the much-vaunted code of employment practice

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which the British government hopes to strengthen and improve. (Denis Thatcher is listed as a director of one of the firms discovered in this year's report to have paid below minimum wages.)

One of the intentions of African member states is to persuade London to help set up the machinery to implement existing Commonwealth restrictions. Their hope lies not in political arguments of persuasion but in the profit value of the Commonwealth to British business, which would not wish to see its demise. □

ACHILLE LAURO

US MARCHES IN FRENCH FOOTSTEPS

. . . and may turn out to stumble as badly, says CLAUDIA WRIGHT

Washington

THE US INTERCEPTION of an Egyptian aircraft flying the *Achille Lauro* hijackers from Cairo had a precedent 29 years ago. On 22 October 1956, the French successfully diverted a Moroccan civilian aircraft on its way to Tunis. With the connivance of French crew on board, the plane landed instead at Algiers — then under French colonial rule — where five Algerian Arabs on board were arrested.

They included Ahmed Ben Bella, the head of the Algerian National Liberation Front's military command, based in Cairo. The Arabs had been flying from a meeting in Morocco to a conference in Tunis — they had received French pledges of safe conduct, and been told the socialist government in Paris wanted to negotiate an end to the Algerian war of independence.

'One of the most decisive French actions in the drive against the Nationalist rebels', the *New York Times* reported. Arab reaction was immediate, widespread, and violent. Within two days more than 60 Europeans had been killed and dozens injured in Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria; the French consulate in Jordan was burned; there were protests in Cairo and Beirut. The Algerian war continued, increasingly bitter and bloody, for another six years.

In the past week, in the midst of official and media celebrations of the US aircraft interception, no-one in Washington remembered the earlier episode. The president's national security advisor, Colonel Robert McFarlane, was too busy revelling in America's display of military *élan* to draw parallels between the two events, or notice what a costly failure the earlier hijacking eventually proved to be for France.

EVEN BEFORE he rose to the Reagan White House, McFarlane had been an advocate of military operations that show the president off to domestic advantage. After playing a minor role in President Ford's 1975 operation to rescue the crew of the US merchant ship, *Mayaguez*, McFarlane wrote that 'Americans do not support vacillation. They expect their leaders to lead, to be clear, forthright, and firm . . . Americans like to win.' International crises in McFarlane's view are 'tests of (US) stability, national character, will and resolve.' This was also the mood of the French military in 1956.

The Administration's confident *animus* towards the Palestinians is fed by more than the proto-Israelis in Washington. There are factions of pro-American officials in most of the Arab states that can be counted on to do Washington's bidding in a crisis like the affair of the *Achille Lauro*. They, US officials are sure, can repress anti-American protests in their region and so far this has proved to be so — nothing like the mass violence that followed the 1956 Algerian hijacking has taken place in Egypt, Tunis or elsewhere in the Arab world.

The Administration's Arab friends voice their apprehension of being swept away so often they sound in Washington like Chicken Little, but US officials believe these fears can be easily allayed. Their self-assurance was reinforced by the visit of Prince Sultan, Saudi defence minister, to the President on 4 October, after which Sultan called the US decision to abstain in the vote on the UN resolution condemning Israel's raid on Tunis a great victory for the Arabs.

Arab leaders who are less powerful than the Saudis are not less dependent and uncritical. Through the combination of Israeli threats to Arab security and just enough US arms to create a pro-American military officer corps Washington can run its Arab protectorate as it pleases and with far less resistance than the French experienced in the 1950s. In Tunis, there are cabinet ministers who still refuse to believe Washington had advance knowledge of the Israeli raid; the Administration is planning to offer them some additional radars, *Hawk* ground-to-air missiles, and military grants to sweeten the past fortnight's bitter pills. Even within the PLO, Yasser Arafat and a number of his closest aides thought until now they could strike a genuine bargain with the Administration following the February accord with King Hussein.

In Western Europe, the Allies have colluded in Washington's success — defining terrorist acts, legislating new sanctions, restricting Arab trade with the west, and detering an independent European approach to the Palestinian conflict. The only European state to dare oppose Administration policy has been Greece, highlighted by the contrast between the US handling of Greece in the midsummer TWA hijacking and of Italy in the *Achille Lauro* affair. Greece was punished by a US embargo on the tourist trade that may end up costing more than $100 million in lost revenues. Italy, whose security measures for the Genoa cruise ship were far worse than Athens airport — but who has been a faithful ally of the US, particularly in nuclear matters — is off scot free.

WHAT IS HAPPENING ought to be clear and it ought to worry the Americans. They took over 'responsibility' for the French and British protectorates in the Middle East when Paris and London couldn't afford the cost in blood and treasure of putting down the 'Arab terrorists' any longer. US aid to Israel has been expensive, but politically much the cheapest and most effective way Washington could control the region without having to create US garrisons and risk American lives. Israel supplied the 'mercenaries' — the US paid their bills. The Lebanon War should have been a warning to the Reagan Administration, but it seems only to have whetted their appetite for revenge.

When Israel and the US both say that Palestinian nationalists and PLO supporters are all terrorists, then Israel and the US are at war with all Palestinians. In such a war, all distinctions disappear between Palestinians, Arabs and Moslems on one side, Israelis, Americans and Jews on the other — political symbols became military targets. Public rhetoric takes on religious and racist tones on both sides. A desperate operation against Israel can easily become, as in the TWA and *Achille Lauro* affairs, the occasion for murder of innocent bystanders who happen to be Israeli or American or Jewish as was the case with Leon Klinghoffer. Today Americans can applaud easy military operations against unarmed civilian aircraft — when the war expands and there are no 'clean' operations to applaud, the will of ordinary Americans to sustain the cost of the American-Israeli protectorate may disintegrate, just as French will collapsed six years after the Ben Bella hijacking. Six years from now, President Reagan's successor will be running for re-election; Reagan will be a memory, and the popularity of his military exploits against the Arabs quite forgotten. □

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LETTERS

Stereotypes — who needs 'em?

Andrew Elliott, Oxford

One reason for the reluctance of gay MPs (in the Labour Party at any rate) to show 'more openness' and support 'liberating legislation' (*NS* 4 October) may be found in the heterosexist mentality underlying Harriet Harman's suggestion (in the same issue) for 'a new political stereotype'.

A genuine commitment to gay rights should entail equal respect towards alternative lifestyles, which, however far removed from the nuclear family, do not *ipso facto* diminish their incumbents' capacity to represent others from different strata of the pluralistic, multicultural society in which we all live.

This will be achieved not simply by idealising heterosexual husband/fathers who help with the washing up and looking after the children in place of 'burnt out workaholics who never see their family'; but by dispensing with all stereotypes (and their associated 'normalities') altogether.

Glad not to be gay?

Alice J. Bondi, Alston, Cumbria

Why oh why did you find it necessary to state that John Nicholson (*NS* 4 October) isn't gay? You make it seem that it's something to be ashamed of.

As long as you feel that people have to be protected from such an accusation, you will perpetuate the sort of thinking that ultimately leads to 'queer-bashing'. Also, your disclaimer implies that it really is a little odd for a nice normal het to be interested in gay rights. It isn't odd. It's crucial, for everyone.

Janie Whyld, Caistor, Lincs.

I wonder how many of your readers will write in to say that you were wrong to publish the fact that John Nicholson is not gay, although he writes supporting gays.

Of course, in an ideal world, it would not be necessary or appropriate to publish this fact. In a society where gay people face such insidious discrimination against them, it is important to publicise the fact that there are people who support their initiative and energy, despite not being like them, and value their difference.

It is important to declare how we are sexually at this stage.

Staggers at Sandhurst

John Keegan, The Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst

I enjoyed Malcolm Imrie's piece (*NS* 4 October) with its implication that no officers' mess takes the *New Statesman*, all the more for reading it over tea in the officers' mess at Sandhurst, which has taken the *Staggers* for at least 26 years.

I, like James Lewis, would rather have been in Ward's Irish House, whose family vault atmosphere he brilliantly evoked, but I don't think they took the *NS* there, nor would it really have suited the character of the place. The Sandhurst mess, on the other hand, is unthinkable without it.

Orders to refuse

John Hurst, Ex-Services CND

Malcolm Imrie's review of *Soldier, Soldier* was right to draw attention to the doubts of soldiers serving at Greenham. The women have told us of a case of a young squaddie breaking down in tears at the wire shortly after returning from a lousy year in Lebanon to find his wife agreed with everything the women were saying.

But being ordered to defend foreign missiles instead of defending Britain is not the least of the burdens on our soldiers' consciences; it is intolerable that young men and women who may have joined up expressly to defend their country should instead be trained to blow it away. Our fight is therefore not only to save the world from a nuclear war, but to save the souls of the individuals who will be ordered to start it.

The 'government of law and order' should take steps to point out that the British Manual of Military Law (Chapter 14, para 443) forbids them from committing, and therefore from conspiring to commit, war crimes. The armed forces not only have a right, but a duty to refuse nuclear orders.

Breath of life for Geneva

Frank Allaun, Manchester

Most CND-ers will find it hard to accept Mary Kaldor's article (*NS* 11 October) deriding the Soviet peace initiative.

Mr Gorbachev's proposal for a 50 per cent cut in strategic weapons is treated derisively. Nearly all members of the peace movement welcome Mr Gorbachev's proposed separate negotiations with the British and French. 'But,' writes Mary Kaldor, 'why only the nuclear weapon states?' Because it is nuclear weapons which are under consideration.

Her views, as expressed, are self-contradictory. For instance, she notes that Neil Kinnock received a positive reaction from Chernenko to his suggestion that the Soviet Union would reduce its SS-20s in response to dismantling Polaris.

Lastly, she demands 'meaningful unilateral action' by Mr Gorbachev — entirely ignoring his ending of test explosions for five months until next January and for longer if America will agree. In sharp contrast Professor Bernard Lowen, co-founder of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, just awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, says: 'We are pleased that the Soviets have listened to us and stopped explosions . . . The ball is now in Mr Reagan's court.'

Neil mops up

Tom Jenkin, Wolverhampton

John McIlroy's article (11 October) was excellent. It accurately reports the shrinkage of Militant influence under the concerted attacks by the party leadership and, more important in some ways, the rank and file in the constituency parties and unions.

However, it is still important to distinguish between the Left of the Labour Party and other sectarian groupings. It appears to me that Neil Kinnock not unexpectedly shows no intention of exerting 'control' over the Left and every intention of mopping up the sectarians. That surely is the best way to ensure that the party is controlled by its members under a leader who for many years has shown determination to defeat 'democratic centralism' and secure the victory of 'democratic socialism'.

Fund is wound up

Stephen Lowe, Adrian Dicks, Clive Ponting Defence Fund

Those among your readers who so generously contributed to the fund set up for Clive Ponting's

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TUT! PRESENTATION JEFFREY
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defence may be interested to learn that the fund is shortly to be wound up.

Of the approximately £5,800 received, some 60 per cent has been paid out for legal expenses not directly connected to the trial and thus not covered by the order for costs made by the court against the prosecution. The remainder is being paid to charities, including the Campaign for Freedom of Information and the National Council for Civil Liberties, which gave invaluable support to the defence effort.

The democrats within

Anthony Arblaster, Chairperson, Socialist Society

Whether it is coincidence or not, both your correspondents' reports from the Labour Party conference (*NS* 4 October) display contempt, or at best indifference, towards the democratic decisions of the conference itself, coupled with admiration for a leader who defies conference itself — not an attractive combination.

For Austin Mitchell an open display of contempt for democracy seems to be the touchstone of leadership: 'Pass resolutions till you're red in the face, I won't implement them.' That is what Kinnock should have said, according to him. The logic of that would be to dispense with the party conference altogether, or at best to reduce it to the marginal, grovelling status of the Conservatives' annual jamboree. Is that what Mitchell wants?

Peter Kellner seems to want it both ways. On the one hand he complains that Labour's conference is not as democratic as those of the SDP and the Liberals because of the existence of the trade union block votes. On the other he laments the fact that the Transport Union's 1.25 million vote is no longer 'comprehensively controlled' by its leader as it was in the good old days of Jack Jones. In other words he doesn't mind block votes so long as they are used to the advantage of the party leadership. But when trade union delegations insist on making up their own minds, that is 'destabilizing'. So much for democracy within the unions.

Both assume, as if it was beyond argument, that a party leader is entirely justified in ignoring the democratic decisions of the party he leads. So much for democracy within the party.

In the wake of Mole

Alessandra Wilson, Headteacher, Walsingham School, London SW4

Sue Townsend's piece *A Mole in the Classroom* (*NS* 27 Sept.) made depressing reading for I expected her to be more perceptive and less emotive than she was. She showed little understanding of why her recent experiences of schools and teachers were so dismal.

The original Mr Mole, obviously and rightly valued by Ms Townsend, taught at a time when both the role and the task of teachers were clearer and simpler than they are now. Teachers then were central to the learning process as owners of desirable bodies of knowledge and as trustees of our cultural heritage. Their task of disseminating these to their pupils was seen as a responsible and important one and although there was deprivation and unemployment in the fifties and sixties, the national mood was optimistic and both education and the economy were expanding. Low morale was not an occupational disease for teachers.

Twenty or 30 years on, the position is startlingly different and nobody should be surprised that teachers cannot all respond positively to all the changes that have taken place.

The role of teachers now is more to manage and facilitate childrens' learning than to be central to it. Ownership of knowledge and cultures are not enough. The value of schooling to society has declined along with the access it once gave to further qualifications, employment and social mobility. Pupils are acutely aware of this and are thus less receptive to schooling than once they were. Further, the national obsession with public examinations (which are designed so that the majority of pupils cannot even hope to achieve the *desiderata* of five O-Level passes) is destructive in its influence throughout the education system.

Add to all of this Government and LEA initiatives in examination reform, curriculum development without sufficient associated INSET for staff development, changes in styles and methods of teaching as well as in curriculum content, plus issues related to equal opportunities connected with race, gender and class, developments in pastoral care and so on, and it can be seen that the demands made on teachers' time, creativity and resourcefulness are enormous and enormously unappreciated. These demands come at a time of falling school rolls, reorganisations, reduced finance, redeployment of teachers and threatened redundancy and a poor pay dispute with no end in sight.

Maybe there are teachers who dislike children or who are cynical about their work but the teaching profession has no more baddies in it than any other. The vast majority of teachers care deeply about children, their families and the communities they serve. However, people need to feel valued, to be valued and to believe in their own professional significance in order to respond as generously as, no doubt, they should.

Ms Townsend got part of the solution to the problems right. Political will and better resources will help to improve the situation but changes in attitudes are also needed — including a change in the way Ms Townsend responds to teachers and their work.

Francis Oeser, London NW5

Sue Townsend's piece is fabulous. She gives the issues of education life, which does seem gradually cauterised, just as she describes.

Yes, we do need a 'revolution in education' — its philosophy, its technology, its funding. But let's not make the old mistake of the '50s, of spending only on buildings and equipment. The first priority must be people — more of them in school, and with far greater skills.

I remember now, in spite of 10 frustrating years with my children's education, that education is still one of the greatest hopes for the future; mine and yours, and theirs.

NUPE — 'we didn't let them down'

Shaun Hilliard, National Union of Public Employees

While not wishing to argue with the general tone of the article on the year-long strike at Addenbrookes Hospital, I must, however, correct one gross error (*NS* 27 September).

It is totally wrong to state or imply that the National Union of Public Employees have in any way failed to support our members financially, physically or materially. On the contrary, NUPE's record is demonstrable proof of our commitment to the strike and the overall campaign against NHS privatisation.

AIDS and food

Frank Rogers, Upton by Chester, Cheshire

Julian Meldrum said all the right things about AIDS from an orthodox medical point of view (*NS* 27 September). Unfortunately it won't help the victims, the potential victims or the carriers very much. He failed to mention two vital factors in his article. One is the nutritional integrity of the individual before and after the infection. The other is the debilitating effect of some drugs as distinct from the hazards of borrowed dirty needles. Butyl and isobutyl nitrite ('poppers') seem to be particularly dangerous here.

It is no use talking of the 'cause' of AIDS when the reality is that there is no single cause but an interaction of at least four, and quite possibly twice that number, of factors. The vast majority of people infected with HTLV-III don't appear to get AIDS just as about 90 per cent of cigarette smokers don't get lung cancer no matter how long they live. We still don't know however how safe a carrier may be since the disease may flare up four or five years after the first infection.

Because of that it is advisable that all carriers and potential carriers should be warned about the debilitating effects of drugs whether they are prescribed or self-selected for hedonistic reasons. They should also be advised to eat food of high nutritional value in order to maintain their immune system at the highest possible pitch.

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'I WAS FIRST, FIRST'

In the struggle for Zimbabwe (1966-80) scores of spirit mediums, the religious leaders of the Shona, gave active support to the resistance, which came to be an act of collaboration between ancestors and their descendants — between the living and the dead. DAVID LAN, whose Guns & Rain — Guerrillas & Spirit Mediums in Zimbabwe, *was published on 16 October by James Currey, tells of the time lightning — was it mere providence? — struck the police post at Bakasa, overlooking the Zambesi valley . . .*

NOON IN the Zambezi Valley. The hottest time of day at the hottest time of year in the hottest part of Zimbabwe.

It's Friday, the day sacred to the ancestors. No one is allowed to work in their fields. Groups of men and older women are sitting outside their huts drinking blood warm beer in tiny ever-decreasing circles of shade.

'In the time of the war', says Stanley meaning the struggle for the liberation of Zimbabwe that had ended 18 months before, 'the guerrillas used to really watch these farmers. If they caught someone working in his field on a rest day, they'd beat him, even kill him. If they met the enemy on a rest day, they'd turn and run. If they fought, the ancestors wouldn't help them. So they'd be shot by the boers and they'd die.'

Without warning the bright blue sky seems to fall a hundred feet and turns deep grey. A wall of heavy rain wheels in from the east. At the first crack and flash, old Miton dashes out from under a tree shaking his stick and shouting at me: 'Go home! Your shirt is dangerous! Go home!' My faded yellow shirt has a stripe of red, a colour the ancestors hate. If I wear it lightning will strike me. I stand and run. Stanley follows. We reach my hut unharmed.

The rains pour down. Clouds slide into the valley and hover above the fields. Now shivering with cold, Stanley and I sit in the

Above: One of the leading mediums of Zimbabwe bequeaths the authority of the ancestors to the first Prime Minister on a cloth printed to celebrate Independence in 1980

Right: Medium possessed by the *mhondoro* of Madzomba

David Lan

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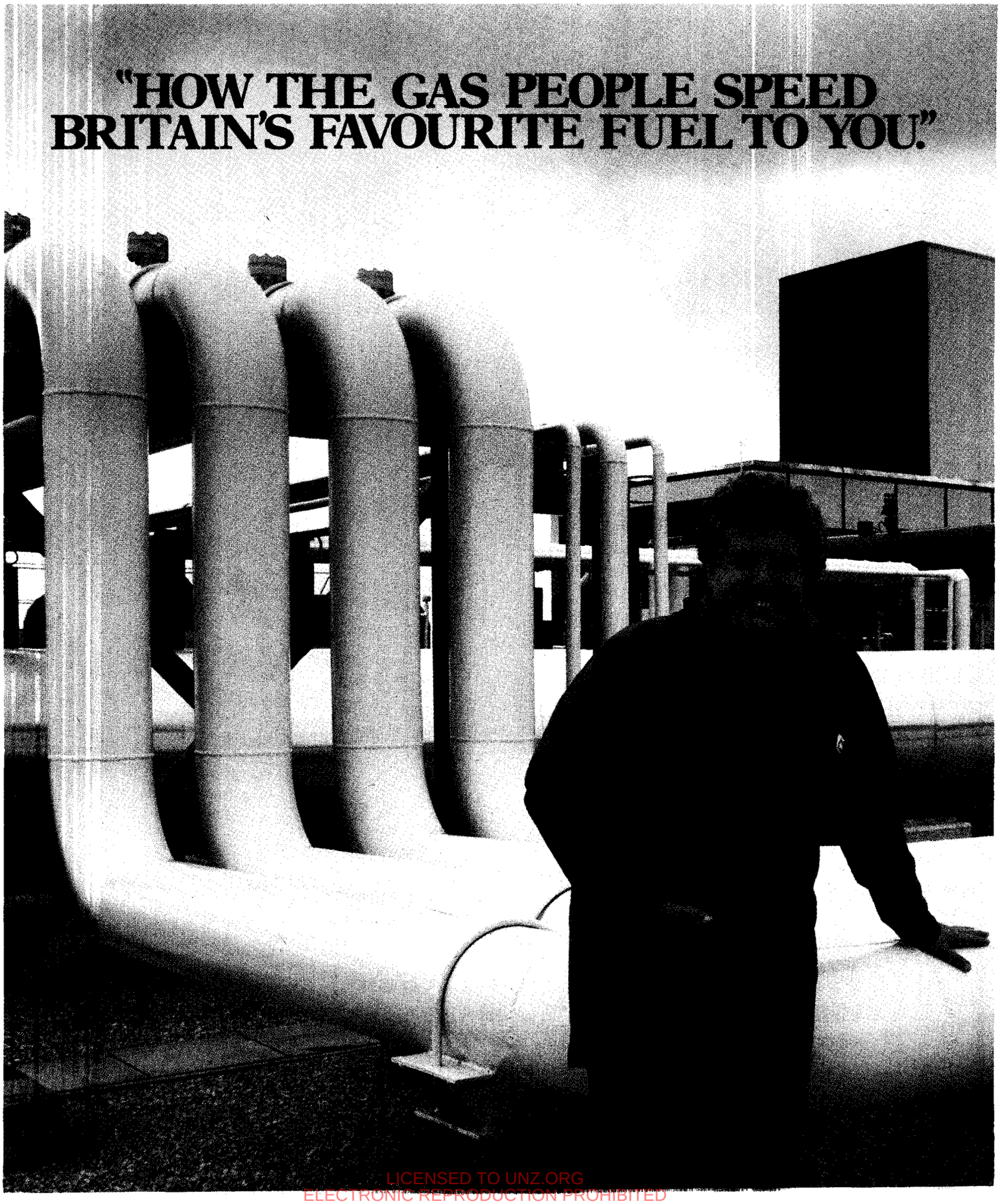

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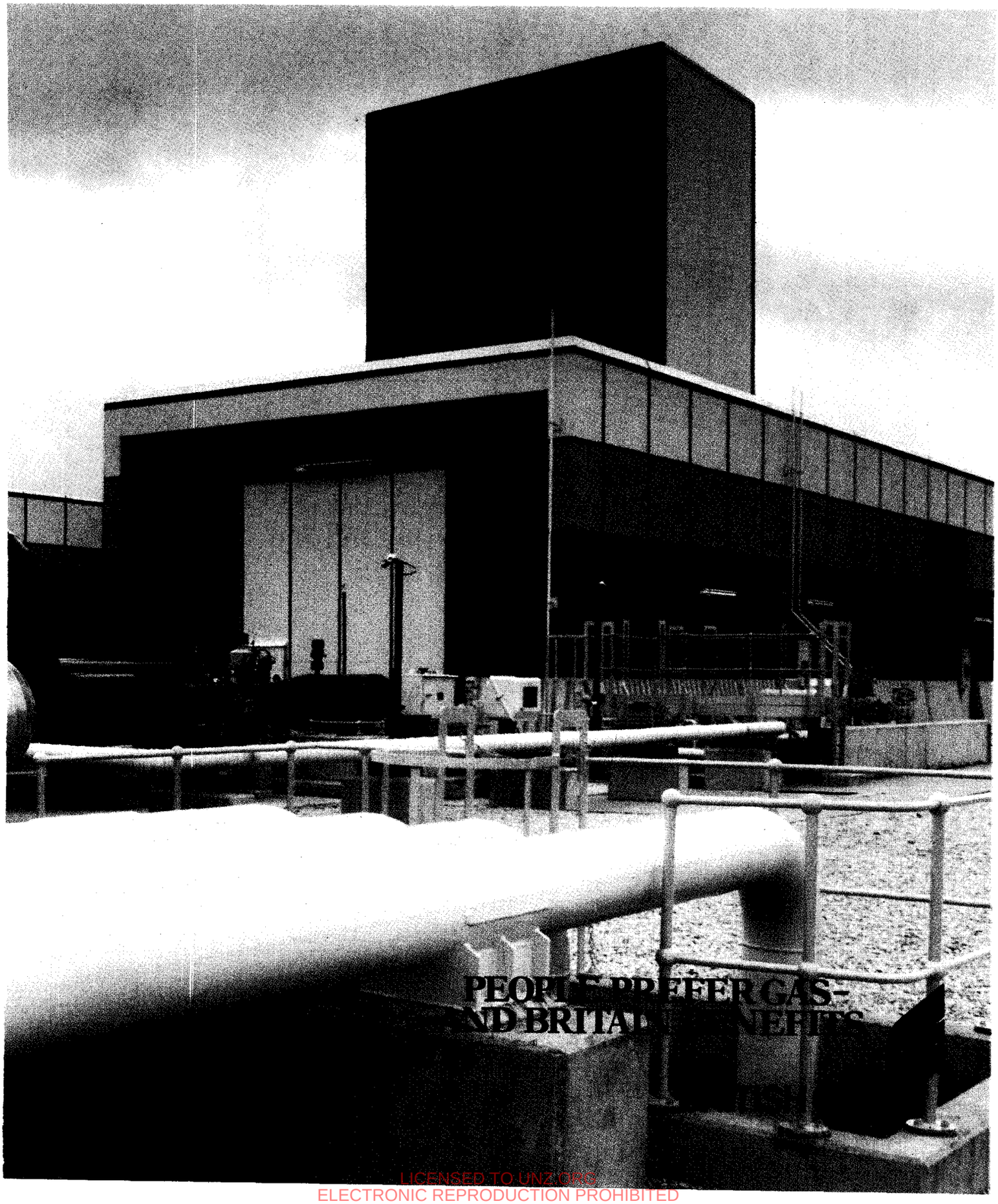
Colin Welland is standing in front of one of these compressor stations, as they're called. Housed within the buildings are two Rolls-Royce Avon engines developing 18,000 horsepower each, and controlled by 'state-of-the-art' computer equipment. Advanced acoustic engineering renders the installation virtually silent.

This is just a small part of the massive investment British Gas has made, and continues to make,in the future of gas. Billions of pounds are being spent with British firms – creating literally thousands of jobs for British workers. Just one more way in which Britain benefits because people prefer gas.



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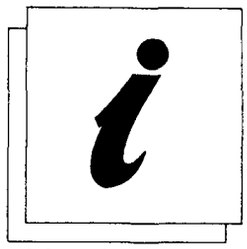
Communication



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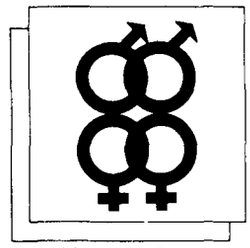
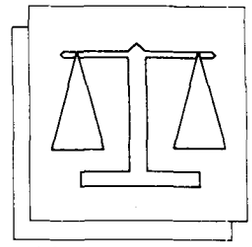
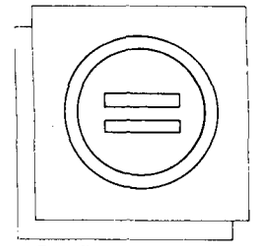


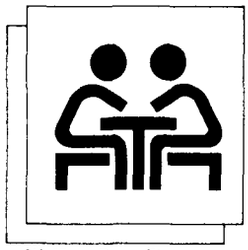
Lesbians and Gay men



Advocacy



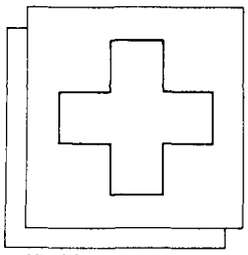
Equality



Welfare Benefits

THE GLC IS WORKING FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Women



Health

Ethnic Minorities

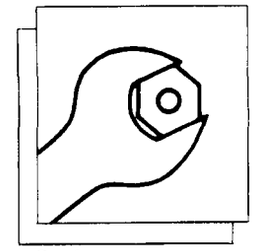
For further information on the GLC Disability Resource Team contact; DRT; Room 92, County Hall, SE1 7PB Tel: 01-633 8554/2235.

Sports

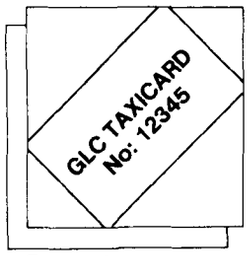
Funding

GLC Disability Resource Team

Arts



Employment



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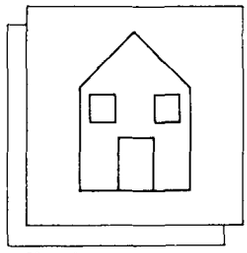
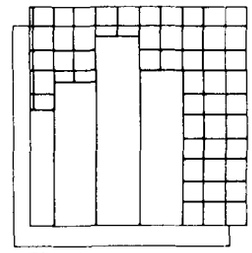
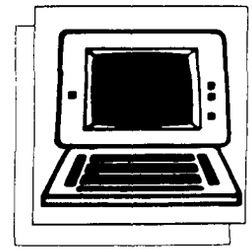


Housing

GLC
Working for London



Planning



New Technology

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door of my hut watching the flashing bands of light whiten the sky.

'Did you hear that lightning destroyed the police post at Bakasa?' Bakasa is a village perched high above us right on the tip of the mountain. No, I hadn't heard.

'All the radios and an armoury were blown up. You see, long back ago that place was the home of an ancestor. For a long time he didn't speak. Now he's come out in a medium. The medium wants his home. He can't be happy with a police post there, can he? So he sent lightning to frighten them away. The thing ancestors hate most is for someone to take the land where they used to live.'

A FEW DAYS later I asked the District Commissioner for his version of what had happened at the police post. Within three months he would be replaced by a stocky young Shona in a good suit beaming confidence and pleasure as he sat at the desk from where for almost 90 years his enemies had ruled. But as yet Mr Grosvener, born in Maidstone, Kent, was still 'in place'.

'Damn it, man, that post gets struck by lightning at least once a year. It had to be there during the war to bounce our signals down into the valley. I've advised very, very firmly not to budge. If they do, god help them. Anytime we have to push through something unpopular — and we'll have to, believe you me — some wild-eyed prophet will crawl out of a bush to say the ancestors won't wear it. They'd be fools to move that post. But then god preserves fools, doesn't he?' He's looking straight at me.

In the files at the District office I found a copy of a report written by a police sergeant who had visited the home of the new medium a few months before:

'When we arrived at Mahaba, the peak on which the medium Zakaria lives, everyone was told to take off his shoes. We sat down and clapped hands. Then the headman produced some money and gave it to the medium and said: "they have come to see you as they had only heard by rumours." The medium said he does not want to see any buildings here. "This is my home. All buildings are to be removed. If this is not done you are going to see something. What happened was only a warning. I am young but there are some above me also. I can do nothing before the removal of these buildings."

'Then the sergeant gave some gifts of mealie meal, meat, beans, salt. He said: "When this post was built, no one knew this was your home. This took some months to build so it can not take a few days to pull down. We also have our superiors who are responsible. Things will be solved bit by bit, not with intimidation. As you are a spirit medium you should realise this. We all learn by mistakes."

David Lan

Young medium possessed by the *mhondoro* or Musuma

'The medium said: "The most important thing is to go and collect my relatives in Zambia so that everything can be prepared. This should be through your offices. It should be done before it stops raining. I am being possessed by two spirits."

'The sergeant asked for a name and he said: "I am not yet able to tell you who I am. I am Mutakuramatenga [the one who bears the heavens]. But I cannot say the other name before all these problems have been solved." '

AS I GRADUALLY learnt more about the medium Zakaria I came to understand how brilliantly he'd stage-managed his arrival in his new home. By not revealing the name of his spirit, he had put the police in a very difficult position. Because of the enormous prestige of spirit mediums, the local police lieutenant [still a white] was willing at least to give a hearing to the demand that he move his police post. But he was afraid that if he moved the post and then discovered that the spirit was a minor one he would look absurd. On the other hand, if he did not move it he would be accused of insulting the ancestors and by extension all the Shona people in the area under his command.

The reason for the mediums' high prestige goes back to the years of rule by Ian Smith's Rhodesian Front and the war that brought them to an end. The Shona have practised spirit possession for centuries. The most important of their mediums are those possessed by the *mhondoro*, the spirits of the long dead chiefs of the past. These spirits can predict the outcome of any event whether to do with politics, agriculture, sickness or war. It has long been the practice of chiefs to consult these spirits before making any major decision.

But the *mhondoro* have another function as well. They protect the fertility of the land, and they bring the rain.

The form colonialism took in Rhodesia made it almost inevitable that the mediums would resist it. Vast tracts of the most fertile lands were taken by the settlers who pushed the peasants into ever smaller and less fertile reserves. The peasants turned to the mediums who protect the land, which meant they were turning to the *mhondoro* that possess the mediums, to the chiefs of the past who had ruled over the land long before the whites came.

The peasants also turned to the nationalists who by the 1950s were building support and organizing resistance both inside and outside the country. In 1972 small groups of guerrillas began to cross from Mozambique into Rhodesia. When they asked to be taken to local leaders whom they could trust, they were taken to the mediums.

In this way began an extraordinary collaboration between guerrillas, mediums and *mhondoro*, between the past and the present, between the living and the dead. When the mediums agreed to support the guerrillas, the peasants followed and the number of young people crossing into Mozambique for military training increased by leaps and bounds. The mediums shared with the guerrillas their intimate knowledge of the countryside and taught them certain ritual prohibitions which would protect them from the dangers of the bush as well as from bullets and land mines. For example, the guerrillas were not allowed to eat certain foods, to have contact with menstruating women or to have sex while within the borders of Zimbabwe.

There were few if any guerrillas who believed that to abide by these prohibitions was enough to ensure victory. Correct strategy, discipline and courage were as essential as in any other war. But there were just as few guerrillas, especially among the lower ranks, who were prepared to go into battle without taking any ritual precautions at all.

Among the higher ranks, however, collaboration with the mediums was contentious. Military policy, based on the experience of China, Vietnam and Mozambique, depended on winning the support of the peasantry. At the same time participation by the peasants in the military struggle was supposed to transform their political consciousness, allowing them a vision of a world in which established relationships between chiefs and followers, women and men, the old and the young had been remade. As the authority of the spirit mediums derived from their claim to possession by dead chiefs, they seemed inextricably bound to the old order which the State had manipulated to enforce its rule. And yet the majority of the mediums were opposed to the State, some so intensely that they went into battle alongside guerrillas to regain the lands they had lost.

How this question was resolved was revealed in spectacular fashion during the Independence celebrations in 1980 when pictures of the most famous of the mediums beamed out from banners hung

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on walls all over the cities. Roads, schools, hospitals and government buildings have all since been renamed in their honour.

IN TRYING TO understand change it is always necessary to understand what has stayed the same. To a large extent the structures of belief and action that underly belief in the ancestors (the authority of male elders, the polluting power of female sexuality) have survived the transition from Rhodesia to Zimbabwe, from police State to democracy. And yet without the support of the mediums, would it have been fascism that survived? Moreover, the political committees that briefly administered the villages immediately after the war included both women and young men and yet had the 'blessing' of the ancestors.

It seems to me that belief in ancestors and in utopias are mirror images. If the world has been a better place perhaps it can be made good once again. During the war the mediums expressed the belief that the land really belonged to the ancestors who had lived on and by it for generations. Through the guerrillas the desire for the land to be returned to their living descendants became a reality.*

When the medium Zakaria arrived in 1981 to reclaim his own piece of land from the police who had used it to mount their attack against the peasants, it was as if the tragedy of the war was being replayed if not as farce, then at least on a scale so small and with the old balance of power so thoroughly overturned that it could be relished. All that was needed was that the new *mhondoro* should prove to be very powerful indeed. Then the police would have no option but to pull down their post and demonstrate that indeed the war was over and they were now on the side of the people and their ancestors.

AT HALF PAST four one afternoon Stanley called to me from the road. He'd just walked all the way down the mountain with a bag full of mangoes for his family. As he passed through Bakasa he'd heard that the medium Zakaria was preparing for a ritual later tonight. I packed my tape recorder, spare cassettes, batteries and blankets and hitched a ride up the mountain in a bread van.

On the smoothly curving ridge at the top of the mountain the road was empty. The full moon had been covered over with clouds. I followed the sound of drums across a field, passed empty huts and the embers of fires, another field, more fires and came out on the long, wide, stony track that leads up the side of the sacred hill Mahaba.

'So you've come to dance with us?' Laughter. 'You're not afraid?' More laughter. The cloud cleared. I climbed Mahaba with the laughing women.

At the centre of the plateau on the top of the hill were five drummers. Around them in a circle women and young girls dancing and singing ancestral songs. Then a ring of boys and younger men singing and calling out to the dancers and drummers. To the right a wide stone terrace, five steps high. On the highest plane the huts the medium had built for himself, his assistants and his family.

On the edge of the plateau the outermost ring of five huge fires. Around one sat the chief, his headman and elders. The chief sent a message: He is glad I'm going to make a tape recording. It's not always possible for them to remember exactly what is said. Will I bring the tape to a meeting in town on the eighth?

Hours and hours of singing, of throbbing, of drumming, of sudden silences when sleep is everywhere and flocks of worn out blankets gather round each fire. The old men force their cups deep into wide clay bowls and dredge up gravelly beer. Somewhere a woman's voice complains. The cicadas. The sweet wood smoke. The massive, perfect moon.

A medium darts through the door of a hut and cries out. The drummers bounce up, blankets tossed aside. Mutakuramatenga at last has come.

The medium leads the singing jabbing his stick up, up into the air.

> You see me, you see me
> He who holds up the heavens, that is me
> This world is for me
> The one who holds up the heavens, that is me.

He dives into the circle of dancers, lunging, retreating, light on his ankle, hopping and bobbing, growling, choking, singing, singing.

'You see him?' A school teacher sweating with excitement is at my side. 'That is the one who said if the buildings aren't pulled down this instant, lions will come. Next night we heard growling. In the morning my uncle's donkey was nothing but bones. That's the one. You see him?'

> You see me, you see me.

At three o'clock a new circle forms on the western edge of the plateau. The medium, possessed, sits on a reed mat. In front of him his helper. On either side are other older mediums who have come as midwives to ease this first emerging of the long dead spirit out of the mouth of his medium into the living world. Around them a ring of 200 men and women seated on the ground.

The helper claps to the medium.

'Grandfather, we are waiting to hear you. We want to hear your guidance for us. Speak to us. We're weak. We know nothing. Help us. Help us.'

Bursts of clapping dart through the crowd.

'Grandfather . . . help us.'

He lifts his eyes, his lizard face, his black goat beard. His chests expands. He chants one line.

> I was the first, the first to come . . .

Clapping. Silence.

> I was the first, the first to come here . . .

Over and over, the same line. Suddenly the dam is broken and the chant begins to flow. Two hours later the spirit at last reveals his true name.

> I am Gomorinonuhwa [the mountain stinks]
> I am the father of the oldest of the spirits
> I was the first, the first one in this country

No one has ever heard of this spirit before. But there is relief. He *is* a powerful spirit. The police post will have to be moved. Of that everyone is sure.

A FEW DAYS later I climbed Mahaba again and asked to see the medium. At first they told me he was tired and he was sick of white people anyway. I waited. A boy came out. Was I the one who made the tape recording? The medium would like to hear.

At last he came out to look at me. I took off my shoes. The boy brought out two stools. We sat. I played him the tape. When it was finished, 'So?', he asked. 'Grandfather,' I replied, 'tell me why you have come.' He gestured at the recorder with his chin. I turned it on.

'Everything happens by itself. It is not me who does these things. You understand this? Zambia is the place where my spirit came very strong on me. It told me to go to Mahaba, to my home.

'I decided to cross the Zambesi. The river was in full flood. I went to cross it but all the others refused. I asked them: give me a plastic bag. I put all my clothes inside. I tied my stick tight around me. I got into the water. Then all the water was still. I crossed. When I reached the other side, the water began to move forward again.

'So I went to Mahaba. I saw some buildings. I slept under a tree. In the morning a young girl found me. She went to tell the headman. He asked me who I was. I said: "I am the one who brings the rain to the people. Now the war is over. This whole country, all of it, is ours. This place, this Mahaba, this is mine. I am the one who lived here long ago. We shall live in peace now. I am home."' □

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* *In Shona belief the spirits that oppose the* mhondoro *are the* varoyi *or witches. Thus when Mugabe describes the whites who voted for Smith in the 1985 elections as 'wicked witches' [see* NS *12.7.85] he is making use of the Shona peasant cosmology to accuse the whites of treachery to the state which the* mhondoro *are believed to protect.*

David Lan is a social anthropologist and playwright. His short film 'The Sunday Judge' was broadcast on BBC2 in June this year.

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Muck, brass and power

Peter Wilsher

Pandaemonium 1660-1886:The Coming of the Machine as seen by contemporary observers
HUMPHREY JENNINGS *Deutsch* £12.95 (£9.95 until 31 December)

ONCE IN TOKYO I thoughtlessly admired a shaft of watery sunshine which had somehow penetrated the city's normal choking smog. The Japanese official with me scowled at the pale blue patch momentarily visible overhead and dismissed it with the curt phrase 'recession sky'. He would have felt thoroughly and approvingly at home in the England of this book, which on almost every page seems wrapped in the stygian, sulphurous, throat-grabbing fog that characterised the first industrial revolution.

Foreigners admire it and choke in it, London, Birmingham and Manchester disappear in it, balloonists burst triumphantly through it, scientists with gongs and whistles grope around measuring its sound-transmitting capabilities and poets colonise the Lake District to escape from it — all through those two heady centuries when muck, brass and imperial power became inextricably and apparently perpetually entwined. One feels almost nostalgic for it now that Mrs Thatcher's realm seems condemned to bask (if that is the word) under a permanently smoke-free recession sky.

Humphrey Jennings, who left behind the raw material for this curious work when he died in 1950 at the early age of 43, was denied time to fulfil more than a fraction of his many-sided early promise. At Cambridge he shone fitfully as poet, painter, critic and theatrical designer, before finding what looked like his true talent as a director of strikingly original and individual documentary films. At the same time he was one of the pioneers of Mass Observation, much involved with ordinary people's reactions to such events as Edward VIII's abdication and the 1937 coronation and, as someone who came of age shortly after the General Strike, he grew increasingly fascinated with the interaction of economics and everyday life.

In 1939 he went North for the first time and wrote to his wife: 'Cotton seems to produce a desolation greater — more extended — than any other industry ... the peculiar kind of human misery which it expresses comes I think from the fact that "Cotton" simply means *work*.' He saw the visit as a turning point and, although most of his time during the war and its aftermath was taken up making films, he managed to collect and assemble an extraordinary collage of texts which he hoped would help explain how places like Manchester had acquired their character, their feel, their pathos, their 'grim sort of fantasy' and the dignity that grew out of association 'with certain events in history'.

In 1941 he made *Listen to Britain*, a film without commentary, consisting entirely of images carefully linked and ordered and juxtaposed so as to illuminate and reinforce each other and this, as his daughter says in her introduction, is very much the technique he used for the construction of *Pandaemonium*. It starts, for example, with the famous passage from Milton's *Paradise Lost* where the fallen angels are busy smelting and forging the metals they have mined from the floors of hell, and then cuts directly to the secretary's memo of 1660 which records the first meeting of what later became the Royal Society dedicated to the promotion of that 'Physico-Mathematical Experimentall Learning' which was to underpin and make possible the coming technological explosion. In the early pages, as Evelyn describes the working of 'a Semi-omnipotent engine' but already deplores the noxious 'smoakes' that arise from London's uncontrolled 'indulgence to sea-coale', and Robert Hooke successfully demonstrates an artificial muscle 'performing without labour the same office which a natural muscle doth in animals', it seems that Jennings (or rather his editor Charles Madge, who has finally brought the work to completion) might just succeed in his ambitious enterprise, the construction of an 'imaginative history' of the machine age.

But soon two kinds of nagging doubt set in. The first concerns the method itself. Maybe a film can work in this way, taking here a panoramic sweep across the sabre-wielding yeomanry at Peterloo, then zooming in for a close-up of Robert Owen at New Lanark and tracking back for a look at the Great Exhibition, rising in the crystal groves of Hyde Park. But is it really suited either to the printed page or to the mighty all-pervasive movement of men, resources and ideas which produced what, until very recently, people tended to regard as modern times?

It is all very well for Jennings to forswear political, mechanical, social and economic history in order to concentrate wholly on the imaginative kind, but the truth is it does not really work. With only the sketchiest references to the law, joint-stock banking, the utilitarians, early trades unionism, poor relief and the sinews of trade, it is almost impossible to understand what the images describe. One minute you have Pepys and Hooke dissecting beetles and discussing the nature of sound waves, the next the landscape is covered with foul-smelling factories; here in the 17th century you have workers starving in the undrained fens while there in the 19th century you have young, clay-smeared girls working for a pittance in the brickfields. The pictures are vivid, certainly, but the mutual illumination is, to put it kindly, dim. What began so boldly as 'imaginative history' quickly degenerates into little more than an anthology or a common-place book.

Even more damagingly, though, the whole concept seems to have outlived its time. No

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doubt in 1951, when Tyneside, Clydeside and the Black Country were prepared (disastrously, as it turned out) to continue more or less what they had been doing for centuries, there would have been demand for something which explained how they came to be the places they were. But much has happened since then. Two generations of conventional historians — David Landes and Eric Hobsbawm here, Carlo Cippola for the whole industrial world — have covered Jennings's ground far more thoroughly and with at least equal imagination. And, worse still, the focus of interest has profoundly shifted. Our preoccupation in 1985 is not so much the coming of the machine and man's enslavement to its inexorable rhythms but the going of the machine, as far as a large part of the manufacturing labour force is concerned, and its rapidly-growing capacity to dispense with the services of clerks, repair-men, designers and middle management as well. Somehow Blake's dark satanic mills (dutifully quoted in Jennings's Passage 28) take on a different significance when their next evolutionary step will probably be to dispense altogether with human hands. □

PAPERBACKS

Like Chinese whispers

Alan Brien

ONE OF THE secrets of writing a gossip column for the quality press consists of unearthing an antique chestnut and giving it a scholarly, personalised polish. If you are writing 'Pendennis' in the *Observer*, you can even up-date the stories to last week, so that only close readers of next week's letters page notice that what appeared as a first-hand anecdote about a new Tory MP began life as a familiar jest in Ralph Reader's *Gang Show* of 1946.

Personally, I prefer the corrective footnotes. Consider the tale of the young guest and his host's embarrassing advice as examined in Frances Donaldson's **Evelyn Waugh: Portrait of a Country Neighbour** (Weidenfeld, £4.95).

As I heard it, just after Waugh's death in 1966, Michael Frayn recalled attending the country wedding of a Waugh daughter, his university contemporary, only to find he was the only one present not wearing a morning coat. When he apologised, Waugh remarked: 'Don't give it another thought, but I think you should have a word with your man.' This is my favourite version and the one I always tell. But the evidence suggests it is wrong in almost every detail.

Mrs Donaldson establishes that a similar tale was printed in a column Frayn then wrote in the *Observer*, but attributed to a friend. And what the father of the bride advised was a rather more terse: 'I should sack your man'. She and her husband were surprised to read this since a young woman friend of both families had several years before told them a story she had just heard from Waugh. In this one, Alan Pryce Jones, as a young man, goes to stay with Lord Clinton. Coming down to dinner, he finds himself the only guest in a dinner jacket. The rest are wearing tails. Clinton remarks: 'I should sack your man.'

But Donaldson knows yet another version he has often told in Waugh's presence. He had it, when himself a young man, from Sir Edward Marsh. Neither Frayne nor friend, Waugh, Pryce Jones nor Clinton appear in the cast. The Donaldsons assumed Waugh had borrowed it then muddled it.

In Waugh's world, where anecdotes are cosseted like orchids, this could not be the end. Waugh had heard the story from Marsh, shortly after it happened, about 20 years previously, and from no one else. Marsh himself could be eliminated since, in his Edwardian youth, tails would have been so much the ordinary dress at country houses the incident would not be worth describing. The point was to spotlight Clinton as an eccentric survival from a more formal age.

Mrs Donaldson's portrait has now been overtaken as a primary source by his *Diaries* and his *Letters* (Penguin). But for those who revere his work, it remains a special testimony since it tells us what Waugh could never know — why his friends remained so loyal and so eager to see him despite sometimes being so badly treated.

George Melly's **Scouse Mouse** (Futura, £1.95) is the third volume of his first-person life story but set earliest in time, covering his Liverpool boyhood up to the age of 14 in 1940. Melly can never be boring. If this lacks some of the bright-eyed brio and knees-up vulgarity of the other two volumes, it has an accuracy of observation and a sensitivity of intuition which can be almost painful. A writer of his talents could easily have performed the Jamesian (Clive) trick of irradiating his memories with comic hyperbole. But I respect this because I believe it. Although... what is one to make of precocious George at junior school sneering at the appointment of Sir Henry Newbolt as Poet Laureate and recommending Kipling? Somewhere between the writing pad and the printing press *someone* might have noted that Newbolt was never Poet Laureate, and the appointment of Masefield (d. 1967) was made in 1930 when our George was not quite four.

How we trust, enjoy, interpret what people put into print about themselves often depends on something as simple as the context in which it is presented. When what Proust wrote to his friends, patrons, contacts and hosts/hostesses was first published in the Twenties and Thirties, the personality appearing was not one to increase the audience for his fiction. Those who had not read *Remembrance of Things Past* found more than enough to put them off. His admirers tried to pretend they had never guessed what a snob, flatterer, petty-fogger and cry-baby he could be. It was not until Philip Kolb, in the late Forties, began to collect Proust's letters in the right order, to index and annotate what had been written to him, to relate his correspondence to his work that real Proust began to emerge.

Now, in Ralph Manheim's translation, we have **Marcel Proust: Selected Letters 1890-1903** (Oxford, £4.95), and we can see that Proust was playing roles, experimenting with styles, exploring the difference between himself and the author and the narrator, between his characters and his friends and the characters his friends adopted. Proust's world is not to everybody's taste, but if you want to taste it, this will drop you in at the shallow end and teach you how to swim into deeper waters.

In 1981, on her 86th birthday, Muriel St Clare Byrne published the six volumes of Tudor correspondence to which she had devoted more than 40 years of her life. The collection was not new — historians had been picking over it ever since it was roughly amassed in the 19th century. But Miss Byrne was the first to realise that these seven years of letters (1533 to 1540) had a special unity. Not only were they almost everything put down on paper by Arthur Plantagenet Lord Lisle, the Governor of Calais, his wife Honor and My Lord's Man at the court of Henry VIII, John Husee, but they had been gathered together by the security services of the day to provide evidence for a charge of treason against any or all. Marvellously edited and selected by Bridget Boland, **The Lisle Letters** manage within pages to tune us in to another world, providing a listening post to the Tudor police state that was not far behind that of Hitler or Stalin. That

A is for

Admirers of Mrs Thatcher
Archer, Jeffrey
Artsy Fartsy Fables
(see Lord, Graham and Prizes, Literary)

B is for

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Penguin should have chosen to publish such an apparently specialised work at such length (548 pp) and low price (£4.95) rather weakens the attack of those who claim these paperback publishers aim only for easy pickings. On second thoughts, perhaps Penguin know something I don't — *The Lisle Letters* could be a best seller.

Cop World (Pan, £2.95) makes me wonder why anybody bothers to buy fictional police-thrillers. There is enough in James McClure's report of a year-long, round-the-clock record of a big-city police force in action to supply readers and writers with plots for a lifetime. The place is San Diego, 100 miles south of LA, and only 14 miles from the Mexican Border. The problems here have a violence, a weirdness, a raw impact of class and race hatred our police meet only in their nightmares. Yet, astonishing to a British city dweller, their forces of law and order willingly (on the whole) operate under restrictions British authorities would never dream of imposing. Can you imagine our detectives being forbidden to drink on duty or, if that is unavoidable, getting written permission beforehand and providing a report afterwards, never ever being bought even a cup of coffee? I am not even sure that such rules make sense. But *Cop World*, as well as being quite blood-chilling at times, does make us discuss such things. □

Wise, or not, after the event

Joan Smith

The Miners' Strike
GEOFFREY GOODMAN *Pluto* £4.50
Strike: Thatcher, Scargill and the Miners
A SUNDAY TIMES INSIGHT BOOK
Deutsch £9.95 *Coronet* £2.50

PRODUCING a good book on the miners' strike is a formidable task. Of the many elements essential to the story, almost all are controversial: how the strike started; the behaviour of the NUM's leaders, especially Arthur Scargill; the role played by women; violence on the part of police and pickets. None of these matters is open to simple analysis. These two books are doubtless the first of many which will attempt to do the job. The difference between them is simple: one is honest and the other isn't.

Let's start with the better of the two books. Geoffrey Goodman, industrial editor of *The Mirror*, combines an account of the main events of the strike with an unemotional analysis which is as critical of Arthur Scargill as it is of Margaret Thatcher. 'Thatcherism and Scargillism were made for each other', he writes.

'There is no mystery about why the miners lost their strike', he concludes bluntly. 'The real mystery is why the NUM leadership chose to adopt, and cling to, the strategy and tactics they established. The miners' leaders were defeated not so much by the Thatcher government as by their own shortage of political wisdom and even, at critical moments, a lack of common sense.' He singles out two occasions — the coal board's offer in July 1984 and the talks at ACAS in October that year — when the NUM could have achieved not outright victory but at least an honourable settlement.

Nor does he flinch from facing the consequences of the NUM's failure to hold a national ballot. 'The substitution of mass picketing in place of a membership ballot was a disaster from which the NUM never recovered', he says. But he goes on to record violent acts perpetrated by the police as well as pickets and points to the disquieting issues raised by the infringement of civil liberties in the courts as miners came to trial.

The courage of the miners, their families and the women's support groups emerges forcefully from the book. And Goodman's conclusion is not entirely a pessimistic one. Just as the general strike in 1926 marked the end of a period in which the political strike was seen as a vehicle for major reform, he argues, so it may be with the miners' year-long struggle. His point is borne out by a growing recognition on the Left of the limits of extra-parliamentary action.

Now for the other book on the same subject, which proclaims itself on the front cover to be 'A Sunday Times Insight Book'. Inside, the paper's editor, Andrew Neil, says that 'the Insight team has done a superb job in producing a classic of contemporary history'. For the record, one of Neil's first acts on becoming editor in 1983 was to *abolish* the Insight team. Of the three *Sunday Times* staff journalists credited with writing the book, the seven 'contributors' and two 'researchers' listed at the back, precious few were ever members of the Insight team in the days when it did exist. In case you're not keeping count, that means 12 people had a hand in this book (not counting the editor, who supplied a half-witted introduction) and oh boy, it shows.

Here is a sample from page 47: 'At first sight it is not at all self-evident just why the reaction [of the NUM team to the coal board's closure proposals in March last year] should have been so belligerent.' The answer, I would humbly suggest, lies on page 31 of the same book. Here we have Margaret Thatcher reshuffling her cabinet eight days after her election victory in 1983. Summoning Peter Walker, the book reveals, she gave him a new job with the clearest possible brief. "'Peter", she said, "I want you to go to Energy. We are going to have a miners' strike."'

The book provides ample evidence of this sort that the miners were lured into a strike at the worst possible moment. But either the various editors, authors, contributors and researchers failed to speak to each other before drawing conclusions or (more likely) the book's own facts were disregarded when they

The hardback price of Seven Clues to the Origin of Life *is £9.95 not £17.95 as given last week.*

THROUGH THE VOLCANOES
A Central American Journey
by Jeremy Paxman
Travelling alone from Belize to Panama, journalist Jeremy Paxman set out to experience firsthand the tensions, sufferings and material hardships that are the daily burden of those who live on the edge of a political volcano.
THROUGH THE VOLCANOES is both a gripping adventure story and a vivid account of how the area which once produced one of the great aboriginal cultures of history became the plaything of dictators and CIA agents.
'I liked this book very much. Mr. Paxman has clear eyes, a good ear and compassionate understanding for some of the most ill-used people on earth.' Martha Gellhorn
£10.95
Michael Joseph

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threatened to interfere with its relentless right-wing analysis.

It does, nevertheless, have its uses. Its account of how the return-to-work movement was organised — individual miners with high mortgages and numerous dependants were singled out for sympathetic approaches from coal board officials — is a valuable lesson in the subtlety of the tactics employed by the NCB. And if you ignore its intended message, the book is full of anecdotes which reveal a great deal about the character of Ian MacGregor. Here's just one example: during a 'whirlwind tour' of the coalfields soon after his appointment as NCB chairman MacGregor delivered a homily to miners at Bilston Glen in Scotland. 'When he departed', the book records, 'he left orders that each of the twenty-four miners he had talked to should be served with a pint of beer.' What is this but benevolent despotism?

But as far as this book is concerned, the women's support groups and police violence hardly entered the picture during the long months of the dispute. That, I suppose, is inevitable from a paper which, according to its editor (himself a former assistant to Peter Walker), approached the strike from the standpoint that 'for the sake of liberal democracy, economic recovery and the rolling back of union power, and for the sake of the sensible voices in the Labour party and the TUC, Scargill and his forces had to be defeated, and would be.' It bears as much resemblance to the old style of Insight investigations as a leatherette sofa to a hide Chesterfield. □

The mugging

Matthew Sweeney

That night I was mugged twice in a dream
on Leather Lane and Gray's Inn Road
annulling my late night poker earnings.

I woke remembering tears on the step
as I'd turned the key, and thought it true.

As once, pissed on Cuban rum, I dreamt
I'd lost one of my only shoes, and felt
beneath the bed to find the dream true.

This time, despite the Cheapside hotel,
the muggers' words, the dream-borders held.

Five played cards at an upstairs table,
among them a hall-of-mirrors distant friend,
then I walked away with forty quid.

The first boys were amiable, even joked
as I fobbed them off with a fiver each.

The second lot went through my pockets,
kicked me, left me with my clothes.
I recognised no-one in either crowd.

The light from the lamppost showed rain
as their steps echoed through empty streets.

In the *TLS* on October 18

NEGLECTED FICTIONS

Over eighty writers and international figures choose works of fiction they would like to see better known.
Contributors include:

Julian Barnes, Anita Brookner, Anthony Burgess, G. Cabrera Infante, Richard Cobb, J. M. Coetzee, Thom Gunn, Claude Lévi-Strauss, David Lodge, Ian McEwan, Czeslaw Milosz, Iris Murdoch, Anthony Powell, Frederic Raphael, Leonardo Sciascia, George Steiner, D. M. Thomas, Alice Thomas Ellis, Marina Warner, Auberon Waugh

The Times Literary Supplement
Every week of the year. 80p.

FICTION

Putting on the style

Grace Ingoldby

The Gold Tip Pfitzer
IRENE HANDL *Cape* £8.95
Black Venus
ANGELA CARTER *Chatto* £8.95
Awaiting Trespass: A Pasión
LINDA TY-CASPER *Readers International* £8.95 & £3.95
Natural Selection
MARGARET MULVIHILL *Pandora* £3.95

SUFFERING ACUTE withdrawal symptoms from the end of his marriage and thus of his connection with the chic French Benoirs, Castleton is back with his own tribe in **The Gold Tip Pfitzer**, Irene Handl's positively sparkling sequel to *The Sioux*. It being August, and the Castleton women in their 'well-filled tights' being English, Christmas is discussed: '"Won't it be utter blissikins having darling old Tosh at Ashwater. I simply can't wait for Christmas". For a moment the air is darkened with cocktail shakers and desk sets in tooled leather, from Aspreys for Tosher, with love.' Across the channel his ex-wife and her brother are arguing, temporarily stalled beneath 'some sort of terrible Swiss tree'.

What takes these families, Handl's writing, beyond the world of Wooster and plunging into that of Compton Burnett is the fact that Tosh is broken-hearted in England in the Castleton estate car with its single wellington boots and its stink of 'bat oil and dogs', that, in this awful car, beneath the cover of a discarded hat, he is holding his brother's hand.

This story, pivoting on the death of Castleton's French stepson from leukemia, is both hysterically funny and arrestingly sad. Handl's description of the dying pampered boy crouched in a palatial bathroom — 'He has suffered so much he is neither male nor female or old or young or anything except dead' — embeds itself as surely as fishhooks in your heart. The subsequent observation that an insect, 'like a flying moustache', zooms in at the final moment to feast on a pile of blood-soaked towels is pure Handl, pure delight. The novel works in its own right while making the reader greedy for the world described in what Castleton calls 'Vol.1' and, in a season when books are being measured, 'good', 'better', this Handl reprint comes out top of the league, 'best'.

Angela Carter's writing is, by contrast, much easier to admire than to enjoy. Her latest collection of short stories, **Black Venus**, leaves one in no doubt whatsoever that she has language at her fingertips if not beneath her belt. The tired metaphor, the familiar phrase, dare one say the cliché, are outside the orbit of this distant angel who is brilliant when being colloquial and tilts each observation until it

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sheds a clearer, brighter light. The stories range from the Old World to the New, from kitchen comedy to a wolf child 'hairy as Magdalen in the wilderness' across to Shakespeare and on to Edgar Alan Poe. Carter alternately soars and pelts the reader with her prose; the murderess Lizzie Borden dreams, 'sleep opened within her a disorderly house', Black Venus dances in an apartment where 'night comes in on feet of fur', where the bulbous legs of armchairs 'grin and grimace cinquecento faces...' It is perhaps these last, the armchairs, which make the reader gasp for some relief. At times the prose reads with the breathless gush of a cookery writer praising egg whites, the mind drifts off...There is plenty here for the Carter connoisseur but nothing that bridges the distance between writer and reader to create commitment, involvement between the two; style has beaten content into submission to the detriment of both.

Small print from last week's paper disclosed the discovery of 12 headless bodies, business as usual in the Philippines, and in this context it is hardly surprising that Linda Ty-Casper's novel has not been published there. **Awaiting Trespass** is purposely slow moving; subtitled *a pasión*, a chanted chronicle of agonies, it circles round the wake for the wealthy playboy Don Severino and is prefaced by its author as 'a book of revelations about what tyranny forces people to become; and what, by resisting, they can insist on being'. The intense Roman Catholicism of the Severinos, well heeled and well connected — 'they can't understand how anyone can be content with enough', is considerably upset during the wake by speculation concerning the casket which, in a severe break with tradition, is discovered to be securely sealed. The mores of the three elderly sisters are questioned by other members of the family as they face the political and personal, possibly financial, repercussions of opening the dreadful box. Spattered with poetry it doesn't really need, the novel does however move with grace to its conclusion, making a political and moral point that stretches right back to Antigone: how best to honour our dead?

Margaret Mulvihill's **Natural Selection** deals with a familiar cast but is none the worse for it. Her world owes something to Bradbury and Murdoch, bright young things and seedier older ones all loosely involved with the open-plan offices at 'New Vision', a publisher's run with 'feudal confidence' by Stanley who orchestrates the production of a clutch of coffee-table books concerned with the 'World of Swamps'. On the periphery is Clive, the going-to-paunch and losing-the-muse household name; Hella Branstrom whose televised experiences on Silbury Hill are broadcast '... in order to illuminate the inspiration behind her latest show, an "anti-retinal" experience entitled "Sperm Versus Milk"'; plus the Murdochian convolutions and attachments of Fabian, Martin, Dolores, Laura and Cassiope. But Mulvihill is very funny in her own right as she follows the fate of Irish Maureen who wriggles her way out of her own 'crepuscular corner' of New Vision, acclimatises herself to 'the Judas etiquette of the upper orders' and surprises everyone including herself at a visit to Clive's Dordogne summer court. A wry and memorable first book. □

ART

A blast of heat

John Spurling

Was it Germany, not France, that set the pace for 20th-century art? A spectacular new exhibition at the Royal Academy prompts some subversive speculation.

MY FIRST RESPONSE to this enormous exhibition was enthusiastic and nationalistic. No, the French were not after all the master race of 20th-century art, laying down the law and the style for more or less subservient colonials in the rest of Europe and America. German romanticism (re-labelled Expressionism) was a match for French classicism and occupied all the wild, emotional territory to which the French Fauves had only made a token claim.

The first four galleries of *German Art in the 20th Century*, taking us up to and including the First War, are a kind of Riot of Spring. The heat of the colours, the energetic primitivism of the forms and the mostly innocent subject matter (landscape, nudes, children, horses) tend to conceal from us what must at the time have seemed wilfully discordant, feverish, distorted and unbalanced.

Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, the leading figure of the 'Brücke' group, is represented by several of his vaguely sinister pre-war street-scenes (painted in 1913/14) as well as by two grisly war-paintings from 1915: *Self-Portrait as a Soldier* and *Artillerymen in the Shower* — a batch of thin, naked, yellow figures surrounding a boiler like the up-ended cannon whose feeders and fodder they are. Yet the colours sing on regardless and in the context of his group and his own earlier paintings and even more that of the spiritually exalted 'Blaue Reiter' group (Marc, Macke and Kandinsky) in the next gallery, he still seems more ecstatic than desperate. Of these pre-First War artists it is only Ludwig Meidner who, in a series of violently apocalyptic paintings of exploding cities painted before the outbreak of war, leaves no doubt of what lay below and ahead of all this upsurge of energy, excitement and lurid coloration.

The repercussions, ricochets and reactions fill the rest of the show. The grand central gallery is dominated by Germany's answer to Picasso, the extraordinary Max Beckmann. Although he was only three years younger than Picasso, Beckmann didn't mature as a painter until after the First War. He was a powerful colourist but, like Picasso, always subordinated colour to form and line. His command of crowded spaces and intricate multiple perspectives and the densely packed symbolism of his motifs make him seem at first immensely more complicated than his post-war contemporaries. Whatever their chosen mode — satire (Grosz, Dix, Hausmann), realism (Dix, Schlichter, Shad), dreamlike withdrawal (Schlemmer) — they wear their weary and disillusioned hearts on their sleeves. But though the individual details may contain esoteric references, nothing, as a whole, could be more straightforwardly accusatory or monstrously descriptive than Beckmann's depictions of Nazidom in *Birds' Hell* and *Dance of the Cut-Throats*; nor has any artist since Rembrandt achieved such a varied and emotionally revealing series of self-portraits (there are three in the exhibition).

Germany's answer to Picasso: Beckmann *Self Portrait with Saxophone* (1930)

Seen through the eyes of German painters, the inter-war period looks even shorter and darker than usual. The sour and rackety Weimar aftermath explored by Beckmann, Grosz, Dix and others is followed immediately by the next hellish prelude, whose psychic historian is Beckmann and whose prophet of doom is Max Ernst, his relatively classical surrealist phase debouching into a series of nightmare allegories which are as German and romantic as anything that ever came out of a pine forest or a black lake.

But it is just at this point that one becomes aware of the partiality of the story being told by the exhibition. It is inevitable that most of the artists on show should be those denounced and mockingly exhibited by Hitler as 'degenerate' and that those he favoured in their place should be entirely excluded, but it would surely have been interesting to show some of these, if only to prove how very inferior and academic they were. On the other hand, there are many abstract artists, especially those with French or Bauhaus connections (several of them also

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persecuted by the Nazis), who do not appear here. The organisers, one begins to perceive, were not so much opposed to Hitler's reactionary taste as determined to exclude anything without the party-card of *Sturm und Drang*.

The reason for this is revealed by the post-Second War section of the show, which fills the remaining seven galleries. After two brief and mainly arid anterooms of post-war abstraction and the gloomy German version of Pop painting, we are ushered into the same stable of German contemporary artists which was being promoted by two of these same organisers in the 1981 RA show called *A New Spirit in Painting*. Since then, these particular artists have done very nicely, thank you, and whether you inquire at the Tate or the Whitechapel or at leading commercial galleries such as Waddington's or d'Offay's you will find that, in this country at least, they *are* German contemporary art.

Not all of them are worthless. Anselm Kiefer's ambivalent landscapes and interiors evoking both the heroic myths of Germany and the devastation they helped to bring about; A. R. Penck's black stick figures suggesting a grim renewal of life in the cave; K. H. Hödicke's dramatically shadowed Berlin buildings, obscurely threatening behind their dead windows: these are all memorable and disturbing images. But they are swamped by too much large-scale posturing dross and the exhibition drifts into shallow confusion at about its mid-point.

My second response, even to the earlier part, was more circumspect than my first. German Expressionism has a fading effect. The emotional heat scorches an image on your mind the moment you meet it, but when you return the heat has diminished and there is nothing to add to the original image. Beckmann, Kandinsky and Klee are, of course, the great exceptions (though Klee is very narrowly represented here) but it is no coincidence that the greater part of the massive catalogue (every work illustrated in colour, price £14.90, weight 5½ pounds) is a discussion — a very stimulating one, in many essays by many scholars — not of individual works but of generalities and, above all, of what one essayist usefully calls 'Germanity'. □

German Art in the 20th Century *is at the RA until 22 December, then at the Staatsgalerie, Stuttgart.*

MUSIC

Wild years

Geoff Dyer

Lips round the bottle, foot on the throttle, Tom Waits is in Britain

UNLIKE MOST of those who live in the wake of their own legend, Tom Waits has consistently failed to disappoint. The same is probably true of Springsteen, but, while he is commandingly perched on top of his towering

Junkyard scavenger Tom Waits: 'a character from one of his own songs' ▸

opus, Waits is still a character from one of his own songs.

Even before they were legitimised by Springsteen's cover version of Waits's 'Jersey Girl', the comparisons were inevitable: Springsteen riding high on a version of American myth; Waits grubbing through his pockets looking for his ticket. Both Springsteen and Waits have their eyes on the stars: it's just that Waits is content with the view from the gutter. More importantly, both have managed to create a complete world out of their songs. Everything about Waits's world is, well, Waitsian. His landscapes live like his characters: the sun 'comes crawling yellow out of a manhole cover'; either that or it comes 'cracking hard like a bullwhip' — 'not taking any lip from the night before'. Waits carries his world round with him like a hip flask, managing, wherever he goes, to sniff out the one bar in town where you can get a drink 24 hours a day *and* get your dog shaved — 'always an important thing for me.'

Waits began seriously studying for the bar at 23 with *Closing Time* (1973), a soft-lit collection of acoustic folk-blues ballads and laments, and continued with *Looking for the Heart of Saturday Night*. The voice soon got rougher; he began sounding like a man who used a meths and gravel mouthwash and moved in to the ripped Naugahyde territory of *Nighthawks at the Diner*. After *Small Change* the late Seventies saw him enter his classic swilled-out Valentino phase. *Blue Valentine* and *Foreign Affairs* combined delicate piano and a heavier instrumental backing in extended songs *noirs*, neon lullabies and poolhall romances. *Heart Attack and Vine* was the nearest Waits came to the new wave, adding some rasping guitar to the faster numbers.

After the score for Coppola's *One From the Heart* Waits entered his current mode of 'junkyard orchestral deviation' with *Swordfishtrombone*, a series of fragments from a semi-legible journal in which Waits and his band play just about anything that comes to hand, as long as it makes a noise. The new album, *Rain Dogs*, continues in the same vein. Leftovers from pantomime, pop and blues are banged together into a mix of damaged vaudeville, gut-shot polka and arthritic stomps. Among the 19 tracks there is even a potential hit single in the shape of 'Downtown Train'. Waits is less a musician these days than an inventor of marvellous, mobile musical machinery. Schoenberg might have written like this if he'd played in a garage band between working shifts in a car plant.

Waits is also a consummate performer. I think it was Ken Dodd who said that the trouble with Freud was that he'd never played the Glasgow Empire on a Friday night. Maybe Waits hasn't either but at the Edinburgh Playhouse on Monday (the first night of his European tour) he had a restless audience (people were still being torched to their seats five numbers into the set — Tom waits for no man — and everyone seemed to need two or three pisses apiece) pleading for more. Decked out in his favourite regalia of drop-dead suit (the serious seersucker, green gaberdine and cranberry accoutrements are gone), trilby and alligator boots, Waits and his five-piece ensemble opened with a hefty selection from the weirdly orchestrated *Swordfishtrombone*. Similar material from the new album was mixed in with quieter piano numbers like 'Sight for Sore Eyes', 'Postcard From A Hooker in Minneapolis' and 'Ruby's Arms' from the earlier albums.

When he retired to a sofa for an extended talk through 'Frank's Wild Years' (soon to be extended still further into a full musical) everyone was half hoping he'd stay there for a while, for Waits, as well as a mastersinger and writer, is also funny man and raconteur (skills born of there always being two barstools between you and the world). On record, the wit is compacted hard: 'Christ, I've got my lips around the bottle, my foot's on the throttle.'

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Live, you can look forward to long narrative diversions: 'He was the kind of guy who'd sell you a rat's asshole for a wedding ring; I'm the kinda guy that'd take a dozen of them.'

Back at the mike Waits heaves up his voice like an anchor and moves around like he's got two left alligator boots. Not exactly a dancer then — he lurches around like Dean Moriarty's dad, or throws out his arms like a conductor with something unpleasant stuck to his baton.

Yes, they threw away the still when they made Waits and by 10.30 everyone was realising what a rare glimpse of him they were getting. Requests for songs were shouted out with the vehemence usually reserved for abuse. The show ended two encores later with 'Blue Valentines'. Nobody was disappointed, but the mass of material still unplayed suggests that the hastily rehearsed Edinburgh performance was no more than a snifter of what's to come in his week at London's Dominion.

Treat a friend to a ticket; if you haven't got a friend, then all the better. Phone yourself up and ask yourself out. Like he said, at least you're always around. □

Tom Waits plays the London Dominion on 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23 & 24 October; Raindogs *is released on Island Records.*

Schwarzenneger and pectorals in *Red Sonja*

FILMS

Splat!

John Coleman

Mad Max Beyond Thunderdome (15)
Warner; Classics, Haymarket and Oxford Street; ABCs, Bayswater, Fulham and Edgware Road
Red Sonja (PG)
Filmcenta; ABC, Edgware Road
To an Unknown God
NFT, 28 October
What Can I Do with a Male Nude? and **The Angelic Conversation** (PG)
Everyman

SOME TIME AFTER the end of civilisation as we knew it, a process surely hastened by his advent, a rough-rider Australian cop Max (Mel Gibson) burst in eye-popping, vehicle-wrecking form on to neighbourhood screens: that was in 1979. Disabused by antipodean acquaintance of the notion that this had been a rather burly documentary of life down under, I was subsequently able to recognise the 1981 *Mad Max 2* as an expensive comic-strip fantasy, tucking in orts from a stale menu featuring SF, the Western, bike movies and punk. No trouble, then, in confronting the current spasm of this crowd-pleaser, **Mad Max Beyond Thunderdome**, in its full silliness or in accepting that the director of the first two money-makers should welcome a co-worker to bring the third to completion; George Miller and George Ogilvie here share the budget and the blame.

By now, post-holocaust Oz — its picturesque deserts, its shanty-town communities, its Zam-Splat-Zowie ethos — quite demands (in default of intelligence) special effects, special borrowings, even an importation of message. That those lost kids of J. M. Barrie and William Golding should be uneasily spliced to furnish a raw yet Tinkerbell hope is indicative of the piece's cynical eclecticism. Max will emerge as a kind of Lord of the Fly-blown.

And there is Tina Turner as snarly local empress of Bartertown, there are a few tremendous junk-*Metropolis* sets, and there is a surrealist duel-to-the-death between long-tressed Mr Gibson and Master-Blaster (a bright dwarf squatting on the shoulders of an idiot killer: no bad metaphor for the film) which takes place in that Thunderdome, a rope-meshed arena hung with ghoulish pleb-spectators, and is swingily choreographed enough to wake one from the doze of ordinary mayhem and puny morality.

As a loony postscript to this box-office olio, one might as well note the sword-and-saucy **Red Sonja**, where every line of dialogue may effectively be felt as suspended over its perpetrator's head in a cartoon-balloon. The pelty and random clothing of the *Maxes* is comfortably worsted in a crazed event which — in some past we are well rid of — has Brigitte Nielson hacking around with her chest falling out while Arnold Schwarzenegger intrudes his terrific pectorals in her service. Not only the costumes are skimped (though there are some extravagant numbers for such supernumeraries as a baffled looking Ronald Lacey), but such accredited writers as Clive Exton and George MacDonald Fraser and a cinematographer of quality (Giuseppe Rotunno) were patently encouraged to leave their talents at home. A mysterious bummer, with a few wild and huge sets unavailing, and Richard Fleischer named as director.

The National Film Theatre has a promising Spanish Cinema season afoot, the first part (21 October-11 November) devoted to movies produced under the creative intervention of Elias Querejeta: Carlos Saura's *The Hunt*, Erice's *The Spirit of the Beehive* testify, among others, to his rich meddling, in script and sly scope. With the director, he wrote Jaime Chavarri's 1977 **To an Unknown God**, an edgy portrait down the years of a homosexual (balding Hector Alterio, recently seen over here in the Argentine *The Official Version* and *Camila*, strong in unsympathetic roles), whose upbringing as the son of a gardener shot by Fascists has apparently left no political trace: only an erotic preference for his own sex, as he lives comfortably, maybe ironically, as a club magician. The poetry of Lorca, notably his 'Walt Whitman' ode with all its self-sickened equivocation, plays a gritty counterpoint to this fellow's life and bedtimes.

Whereas Derek Jarman, in his **The Angelic Conversation**, noisily has the nerve to interrupt some pretty good sonnets by Shakespeare (sweetly read by Judi Dench off-camera) with a succession of images — two young men, conceivably furniture-movers astray on a seashore in fog, smoke, flames and stop-motion; who shift into a toe-kissing rite soon after which I left — as if his private concerns merited public interest. This is preceded by a marginally livelier short, written and directed by Ron Peck, **What Can I Do with a Male Nude?**, which supplies a mirthless anti-fig-leaf commentary over dull shots of most of a naked bloke.

Orson Welles is dead and, the way things are going, whole adult audacious areas of cinema with him. By now, everyone has had their good

Recommended viewing

A regular selection by our critic from films still doing the rounds

Dim Sum Hong Kong-born Wayne Wang's appealing mosaic portrait (with visual bows to Japanese master Ozu) of Chinese family in freshly observed San Francisco: widowed mother, unmarried daughter, cheery uncle. Touching, humorous, astringent, a young director's invitation to 'only connect'.

Witness Australian director Peter Weir in fine-tuned control of offbeat US thriller. Rugged but honest city policeman (Harrison Ford), grudgingly harboured from bent colleagues by time-warp Amish farmers, shares unconsummated love with Kelly McGillis's superb widow until the inevitable, estranging shoot-out.

The Purple Rose of Cairo Woody Allen's brilliantly faceted, sad-funny fantasy, as relevant to our depressed Eighties as its Depression Thirties. Actor in idiot movie descends from New Jersey screen briefly to woo movie-mad, downtrodden housewife, making chaos and whoopee. (Mia Farrow, Jeff Daniels).

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word about him and his reckless genius. Let me add not a wreath but living flowers. Thanks to archives we can look not merely on his like but on his Ubu-Falstaff in *Chimes at Midnight*, his wicked *Citizen Kane*, his... oh, the roster is still long and potent: we can revisit him and his works. *Circumspice* — and I borrow a bit of Wren's epitaph — and regard the wasteland, the rats' alley where the moribund fund fodder for the moronic, week after sparkless week. □

THEATRE

Come together

Benedict Nightingale

Les Misérables
ALAIN BOUBLIL & CLAUDE-MICHEL SCHONBERG *Barbican*
Mrs Warren's Profession
SHAW *Lyttelton*

LES MISÉRABLES is more pop opera than musical and more phenomenon than either; or so it seemed on opening night. Obviously everyone wanted to know if the directing and designing team that had given the world *Nicholas Nickleby*, then moved on minus a member to *Cats*, had pooled its accumulated wisdom successfully enough to astonish our ears and eyes with epic Hugo. The reviewers' answer to that question has so far been on the grudging, cavilling side. The audience's response, at least at that first performance, was decidedly more rapturous; and not (I think) just because it included the usual quota of friends, sycophants and RSC groupies. The woman to my right looked as if she'd been presented with Dickens, Lloyd Webber's salute to the feline classes *and* the spaceship in *Close Encounters*. So, I daresay, did I.

It was one of those evenings when watchers and watched escalate into a sort of invisible embrace; but it did, it's true, take time before wary flirtation became as orgasmic as that. One felt drawn rather slowly into the tale of Jean Valjean, felon and secular saint. The lyrics were brisk and adroit, but also more plonking and less romantic than they'd probably have seemed if they'd remained in the original French. And Claude-Michel Schönberg's music had a brash, samey lilt which, let me admit, it didn't lose all evening. Certainly, it seemed better suited to the big, brassy climaxes than to the show's more intimate encounters. One tender death scene came blasting through the auditorium like a force-ten fart.

Yet gradually Trevor Nunn and John Caird's production increased its hold on the organs of feeling and wonder. True, there were sentimental improbabilities galore, almost as many as in *Nickleby* itself. But by the end I felt I had seen something beyond both improbability and sentimentality, an almost mythic clash between two definitions of justice and Christian obligation. For a relentless and obsessive Jávert, they mean ensuring that Valjean ends back in the chaingang, because he broke his parole years ago. For Valjean himself, they mean succouring the oppressed and joining them on the Paris barricades, adopting an illegitimate orphan as his daughter and saving the life of her wounded fiancé, and, when Javert is at the point of his knife, letting him go free.

Colm Wilkinson and Roger Allam, representing mercy and law respectively, bring a steady and unpretentious power to their conflict, and Alun Armstrong is marvellously sly and toothless as Thénadier, the scavenging opportunist forever lurking on its fringes; but then the cast as a whole is surprisingly strong, considering many performers have been recruited from outside RSC ranks.

What finally makes the show, however, is its staging. The revolve seems always to be on the go, bringing us new faces, new places, new incidents; and John Napier furnishes it with an inventiveness rare even for him. Sometimes he's content to work only with light and shadow or, in the case of the famous escape through the Paris sewers, with light and smoke. Sometimes chairs and tables spin sedately towards the front of the stage and we've an inn, or the café in which Hugo's students hatch revolution. But the most effective moments come when two weird timber structures, all barrels and wheels and wonky chairs, trundle out from the wings to be linked by a walkway, or to meet, slant, lock together, like shabby SF monsters copulating. There you've the Paris slums in impressionistic miniature or a street barricade that needs only a topping of youths with flags to be thrillingly complete. I don't think that even the RSC has more successfully combined an assault on the eyes with one on the tear-ducts behind them.

After this big romantic wallow, a little Shavian realism does however come as a good salty antidote. **Mrs Warren's Profession** is the best of his 'plays unpleasant', a piece that took that favourite late-Victorian subject, the ruin of maiden virtue, and gave it a socialist twist. The title character is no wilting repentant, but a woman who is proud to have chosen the career of up-market prostitute, since it was the only alternative to being slowly slaughtered in some East End sweatshop. All this is confided to her feminist daughter Vivie, who at first applauds, only to withdraw her approval with the revelations that follow. Mrs Warren is still running the chain of brothels she founded long ago, still living off other women's humiliation, still interested in the fine figure she cuts in high society. The quivering Shavian finger is finally pointed at capitalism itself, an economic system that exploits, degrades, corrupts, destroys.

It's lively, provocative stuff, capable of ruffling feathers even today; and it's given a sharp, spare production by Anthony Page at the National. Joan Plowright is perhaps a bit comfier and flabbier than Mrs Warren should be — where's the toughness Coral Browne brought to the part 15 years ago? — but the supporting cast is splendidly appropriate, not least Jessica Turner's Vivie, a character with that frosty self-sufficiency so appealing to Shaw and so daunting to his admirers. In her rejection of mother and wooer, blood and love, you can sense his rejection of emotion for intellect. It's a social critique, this play, but at some more surreptitious level a personal manifesto too — and either way it's fascinating. □

IT MAY NOT be treachery, but it feels like it, and you learn it young. I was a serious and devoutly Catholic child and it hurt my not yet entirely articulate sense of moral priorities that discussion of the fine points of doctrine, that I used to collect like chewing-gum cards, was liable to embarrass my equally pious but Low Church grandmother and lead to ribald mirth from my agnostic uncle (whose belief that one should not patronise small children mainly took the form of being as rude to them as he would be to an adult). But I was the child of a mixed marriage: my sister and I learned young the important differences between our pushy, intense, assimilated Irish Catholic relatives and the more placid Norfolk farmers on our mother's side. Attitudes were different, whether to money, the behaviour of children or the display of emotional life. We learned to translate what we wanted to say into a language appropriate to the hearers; or, more usually, to be silent. At twelve, good faith is a luxury that you already cannot afford. And the language spoken inside your head is one not even to be mentioned in passing.

What I learned from my family, I apply almost by instinct in adult social life; and it still feels like treachery a lot of the time. London is made up of villages, not all of them geographical. Just running through the communities that I to a greater or lesser extent inhabit, or to which I am linked by friendship, helps define my identity, but also makes me go dizzy from the clashes and the contrasts.

We don't always pick our friends for their morals, particularly for their political morals. It is easier to keep the friend who works for an electronics firm with military links (and was incredibly loyal on a personal level during a difficult bit of my past) away from the friends who spend time at Greenham and are entitled not to understand my fondness for and qualified loyalty to him. Entitled not to understand, but *not* entitled to demand from me a choice whose full terms they do not know.

The different villages of my life speak different languages and not all of them translate readily. Even when you have, I hope, discarded snobbery, there is still the question of whether the personnel executive who lives in Maida Vale, dresses in Laura Ashley and buys her kitchen equipment from the Habitat catalogue is going, if you throw them together, to have anything much to say to the young gay carpenter from Hackney who dresses out of the Expectations catalogue. And why should the young woman from Hackney be exposed to that middle-class small talk in which 'How interesting' is a coded version of 'How incredibly tedious'?

I like giving parties, but, when I do, they tend to consist of a lot of small parties taking place simultaneously in the same room: the science-fiction crowd in one corner, the ex-Oxford poets and crafts reviewers in another, the gay women activists (not even talking to the heterosexual feminists much) on the balcony. To give dinner parties is to involve oneself with all sorts of social assumptions — and what they tend to mean is that the people with a lot in common talk to each other and I talk to the rest. The only time that my friends have mixed easily was round my hospital bed, and I was usually too ill

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OF COURSE, THIS WOULD BE A WEEK'S RATIONS FOR A NICARAGUAN FREEDOM FIGHTER...
ANYONE FOR A SALTED PEANUT...?
GOLLY HOW ABSOLUTELY SUPER...
PERSONALLY, I'D POISON THE LOT OF YOU...
I'M IN THE TAXIDERMY BUSINESS MYSELF...
Cath Jackson

When worlds collide

Roz Kaveney

to appreciate this vision of social unification.

Part of what makes translation impossible is that different groups of my friends have preoccupations incomprehensible to each other; worse, it is often incomprehensible to one group that I, or the other group, should even begin to *care* about such a subject. I was marginally involved in support for the rights of bisexuals and sadomasochists at the London Lesbian and Gay Centre. To explain what was going on to my friend Liz, who was then still selling cheese to the nation, would have involved me in an hour or more's explanation of the theory and practice of seven different factions, with sideways wanders into recent feminist literature, which she is perfectly capable of having bothered to read for herself had she wanted to. So I didn't bother, except to apologise for the way it had all made me late for tea. (The reverse has never applied, but then even SM Dykes know about cheese.)

Friends do not believe what you tell them of the customs of other villages. I have been accused of paranoia for pointing out to women friends that we cannot meet in various women-only spaces because I am known to be transexual and am, accordingly, excluded from them.

When they find out that I am telling the truth, they tend to get very angry: angry with other women friends of mine, who have mixed loyalties on the subject; angry with me for regarding the issue as too complex for anger to be a helpful response. After all, the personal is political, and there is not much point in taking it personally. Anger is not helpful when the issue at stake is that people speak another language and think in another way; if you speak in two tongues, you are always liable to be accused of betrayal, even when you are yourself the person who, if anyone, is being betrayed.

When the pressure gets too intense, you can always run from one village to another. When a collective vote of her flatmates obliged a woman friend to disinvite me from her New Year's Eve party — for the above political reasons, not because I steal the silver — it was nice to be able to say, 'Well, gosh, I'm sorry but actually I'm going to Sabrina Guiness's instead.' If you are involved in a lot of rows simultaneously — which, in this wicked world, and if you are as stroppy as I am, you tend to be — the fact that there are several of them, and that they have such different terms of reference, means that you do not take any one of them quite as seriously. You are too busy.

And forays into one world will often give you precisely the contact or the piece of information that you need in another, while you can dine out in one village on the caricature of another's gossip that translation imposes. It may be a sort of treachery, but treachery often pays. □

TELEVISION

Hugo Williams
Men only

ANY YOUNG MAN of the Mursi tribe of south-western Ethiopia not passionately interested in cattle is considered a drop-out and slightly mad. The Mursi don't have permanent villages and they don't care for art, as such. They derive aesthetic satisfaction from sitting and looking at their cows and talking about them, or training their horns into pleasing shapes. Perhaps they don't need art.

The Mursi don't have leaders. All their decisions are taken communally. Anthropologist David Turton first started filming them in 1974 when they had barely heard of Ethiopia. He recently went back to show them the film of their lives and fate and we watched alongside them as one of their spirit men introduced this graphic and loving record of yet another fading Eden.

It is a time of war for the Mursi. There has been a steady drift north, as the title, **In Search of Cool Ground** (ITV) says. A northern tribe, the Bodi, have been raiding their cattle. There is a public debate to decide what to do. In the West, debates are decided by a vote; issues are split down the middle, shared out between rival parties so we can have the illusion of elections and choice. In undivided societies like the Mursi, 'who have to face very few novel situations', debates are less to make decisions than to mobilise action and maximise public support by connecting the suggested action, through oratory, to some other generally accepted Mursi value, like the need for the safety of their beloved cattle.

One rarely feels privileged watching TV. I watched in fascination as these weary warriors rose from their shade-tree to take up one of the old rifles left behind by the Italians in the Thirties and speak their mind. They would walk away from the crowd, shaking the rifle and speaking in considered, stylised bursts. How could they act so naturally with us there gawping? All credit to those dedicated flies on the wall, cameraman Mike Dodds for one.

Last to speak were the Jelabi, or elders, who are given credit for swaying a debate even if they have only summed up the way the meeting has gone, consensus being reached by a long process of talking, thereby avoiding the split of voting for or against a decision — in this case defensive action. By the end of the film I was left with a new understanding of the African tendency to a one-party state. After all, what's so great about institutionalised conflict if it's imposed?

Until recently the Mursi had time to talk through their troubles. Now their troubles have driven them by famine to an increasing contact with the divided 'outside' world, where the good old days are poured back to you out of boxes. How sad history is.

It has to be said, however, that women didn't get a big look in on all this fairness, unless it was from the long grass 50 yards away. The same is

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still true in the thriving modern city of Lagos, where last week's **Beats of the Heart** (C4) explored the different forms of Nigerian popular music, all alive and well but firmly in the hands of the men. 'Our singer is treated exactly the same as all our other musicians,' claimed one of the very few bandleaders to employ a woman vocalist. His words sounded hollow when this singer, who was also his wife, piped up unexpectedly. 'I hate to say this,' she said straight to camera, 'but what he says is just not true. He treats me like any other Nigerian wife and he doesn't give me enough money. I hate to say this but he doesn't even touch me any more.' Collapse of male chauvinist musician. Shots of crestfallen husband proved that this was indeed a moment of truth.

Next on were the Lujaro Sisters who said of the Lagos record companies, 'They want you to go on paying them until you die,' which was of interest only in as much as it followed international music-biz tradition. As so often in music documentaries, the music mostly lost out to the anecdotal. We had the inevitable Fela Kuti satisfying Western taste for wild African behaviour by marrying 27 girls all at once 'as a protest against continuing colonial rule'; an ironical item that. King Sunny Adé was likewise of interest mainly because he had played for the King of Lagos and received payment in public, in notes, *during* his performance (as did various pretty girls). Sonny Ocoso had tried to look like Cliff Richard when he was young, stretching his hair with hot combs. Now he found that revolution was more commercial: 'Sonny has a sure business sense!' said an aide as we watched him flinging a limited number of his new albums to his revolutionary fans. Another singer found interesting for extra-musical characteristics was Irias Katta, a male civil servant turned female performer who plays thumb-piano and sings with what the programme described as 'black humour'.

This was fine but it didn't leave much time for outlining the differences between music from the Hausa (Muslim) north and the Yoruba south, or the origins of 'high-life', Africa's most famous popular music. The only performer who was interesting musically on this showing was the blind Benjamin Kukuru, a wandering busker who has apparently been 'a major influence' on Nigerian music. 'I am not a recording artist,' said Kukuru, wisely tapping his tambourine. 'I am a beggar. I sing to the people face to face.' It seemed that here was one musician who knew how to beat the record companies at his own game.

We are now more than half way through Alan Whicker's report on every single English person currently living in America, **Whicker's World** (BBC1), and are finding his old Machiavellian tendencies increasingly hard to come by. However, I enjoyed the gay Brit who has opened a Union Jack Store for the thriving homosexual market in Dallas. 'Americans realise they don't have the history or accomplishment that Britain has, but they're hoping for it. I'd like to see America become a great country . . .' Me too. And what better way to help them on their way than by flogging them 'the latest and tightest in European jeans and T shirts'? □

Naseem Khan

Just suppose

IT WAS A GRAND occasion when the general public was invited in to learn of the new plans for the South Bank: canapés and self-congratulation. On the platform of the hired hall sat the new executive chairman, Ronald Grierson. Beneath him in the front row his new board sat, turning to bow ceremonially to the audience when their names were called — two lords, two ladies, three knights, sundry captains of industry. 'A very tough board,' said Roy Strong (one of the knights) approvingly over the white wine afterwards.

Given the flurry of the event and the contentiousness of the issue, one would have been justified in expecting the fanfares to introduce something substantial. After all the South Bank is, to recap, a *cause célèbre*: a flagship for GLC philosophy and politics, all topped off by the defiant, large, candled birthday cake celebrating 95 years of elected government for London. Comprising many units — Festival Hall, Purcell Room, National Theatre, Hayward Gallery, National Film Theatre and more — it makes up what Grierson described as 'one of the world's leading arts centres'. Only six months remain before the Arts Council and the South Bank Board take over this cultural oyster (except for the Hayward which falls in line later). How do they intend to cultivate it?

In fact, when the wrappings of the South Bank press conference were undone, it turned out a little like that children's game when a huge paper parcel is gradually whittled down to reveal something minuscule. There were two main sections to the presentation. First of all the chairman — after his introductions — indicated the kind of lines the Board were following. Nothing very definite, all very generalised. The Board would strive for greater overall coherence, a strong educational and youth emphasis, a festival atmosphere, vigorous marketing; specific ideas are a West End box office and a possible children's museum on site.

The appearance of the place (rightly) had given Grierson cause for concern. Terry Farrell had been asked to undertake a feasibility study for the development of the complex (who paid?). The audio-visual presentation that followed showed discoloured concrete, bleak walkways. Like all top architects, Farrell's solution to the unquestioned decay was inspirational and bold — pull down the walkways; demolish the foyers of the lesser concert halls; add extra buildings in the space created; cover them all over with a see-through top and, lo and behold, a bustling artistic village, a Covent Garden of the South.

So is this vision the future? No, it is not so simple. The Farrell plan is 'only a study of possibilities', Grierson took pains to stress. How much would it cost? It hadn't been costed. More to the immediate point was the financial situation of the South Bank itself. The new Board has costed its annual operation at an initial £11½ millions. Government however has earmarked just about half that amount, a figure that Grierson and his Board were adamant was unacceptable. Where this adamancy will get them is uncertain, though Grierson declared with quiet confidence: 'We believe we will get what we ask for.' If he is right, and if they get a larger slice of the £16 million allocated by government to cover the spending of the doomed metropolitans, who will get less? Won't this make an even greater nonsense of the Arts Council's strategy of tipping the balance of funding away from London to the needy regions? Or will it be new money? Will Mrs Thatcher turn? It is, as you can see, all hypothesis.

But then the whole basis for the South Bank press conference, bewilderingly, appeared to be hypothesis. It had been called to announce a programme that hadn't been worked out, to be paid for by money that may or may not exist, in a futuristic site that might or might not, at some point in the future, come about.

Even the areas of general priority suggested a *déjà vu* quality about them, giving weight to the GLC's own immediate counter-claim that the South Bank Board was 'piggy-backing' on GLC practice. It's certainly true that thought has increasingly been given to providing a greater degree of coherence to the whole site, that education and youth have fared well under the GLC and that specific things like a central box office, following computerisation of the concert halls, had been planned. Nevertheless, the GLC is missing the point if it bases its defence of its tenure simply on a cry of 'We did it first'. What is more striking is what the South Bank plan did not say.

Lacking in the South Bank shopping list was any sense of a rationale. The lift-off achieved by the GLC on the South Bank (particularly in the Festival Hall) wasn't caused by better housekeeping, greater coherence, dialogues, marketing etc. It was achieved because of the central determination to turn an élitist, loss-making venue into a popular, accessible place. In the Festival Hall it resulted in once silent foyers being brought dramatically to life — free music, good buffet food, frequently changing exhibitions (often involving people who'd never known about the South Bank before): a general sense of bustle and ease.

Contrary to common belief, this was not done with huge showers of tax-payers' gold. At the start of the open foyers policy, John Gill, the Foyer Administrator, had the princely sum of £2,000 to spend on exhibitions and events. That budget has climbed, as have the numbers coming into the Festival Hall: 20,000 coming into the building a week on top of the same amount coming to concerts. Figures also show that concert attendance has been a direct beneficiary. For the first time in 20 years, audience figures have grown for two consecutive years. The outdoor large-scale events extended and reinforced that philosophy. Ironically, it resulted in that very quality, a 'more or less permanent sense of festival', that the South Bank Board wants to find. The rationale that could bring that about was far from evident at this press conference. □

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Weekend competition

No 2895 **Set by E.O. Parrott**

Those brought up in the Church of England will doubtless be familiar with the hymn that features 'Gladlie, the cross-eyed bear'. Could we have new and equally bizarre misunderstandings of famous lines of verse? Max. six attempts per entrant. Deadline 31 October.

No 2892 **Set by Jim Anthony**

Reinterpretations of the acronyms of contemporary institutions.

Report **By Di Dact**

I'm afraid this is rather serious: one (or possibly two) of you has (or possibly have) been guilty of INTERFERING WITH HER MAJESTY'S MAIL. Prizes sent to Wandrhyn J. Bonso and Sven Tommecs have been returned with 'Not known at this address' and (worse) '*No such address*' stamped across them. This is a waste of public money and postpeople's time and shoe leather. More to the point, it is IRRITATING to those of us who work in the Complex. I'm sure that the culprit(s) will soon own up: first, I've never known you to be cowards; second, it's the only way you'll get your money; third, if you don't, the entire class may find itself reported to Her. Now, turning briskly to pleasanter things: £2 for each winning acronym below.

CND: Club for Nice Dissidents
BBC: Better Back the Conservatives
TV: Technical Valium

DAVID ENGLAND

MOD: Michael's Own Division
BUPA: Bugger Unemployed Patients Association

V. ERNEST COX

CIA: Coups Instantly Arranged
SDP: Sinister Doctor's Plot

BASIL RANSOME-DAVIES

SDP: Society for Defunct Politicians
NATO: North American Troops in Occupation

NOEL PETTY

TUC: Teeming with Undercover Conservatives
CAMRA: Committee against Adulteration and for More Rustic Alcoholism

NAOMI MARKS

HGV: Horrible Great Vans
AM/FM: Awful Music/Flawless Music

LIONEL BURMAN

BR: Beeching's Remnants
NEC: Neil Expels Commies

TONY MEREDITH

QUANGO: Quite Useless and Needlessly Grandiose Organisation
CIA: Coterie for Intrigue and Agitation

RON RUBIN

SDP: Sundry Delightful People

I.D.M. MORLEY

MORI: Mathematically Originated Runic Interpretations

ALAN CLARK

GCE: Gets Children Ennywhere

ALISON PRINCE

WRP: Without Redgraves Povertystricken

KEN RUDGE

PTA: Police Trespass Authorised

SARA SPAIN

SALT: Squabbles About Licensed Terrorism

JOYCE JOHNSON

BAFTA: Backscratching Awards to Film Tycoons and Actors

PETER NORMAN

YTS: Youth Troubles Shelved

M.E. AULT

YTS: You Tried Slavery?

MICHAEL DOWNES

RIBA: Renovators and Institutors of Building Atrocities

HARRISON EVERARD

NGA: No *Guardian* Again

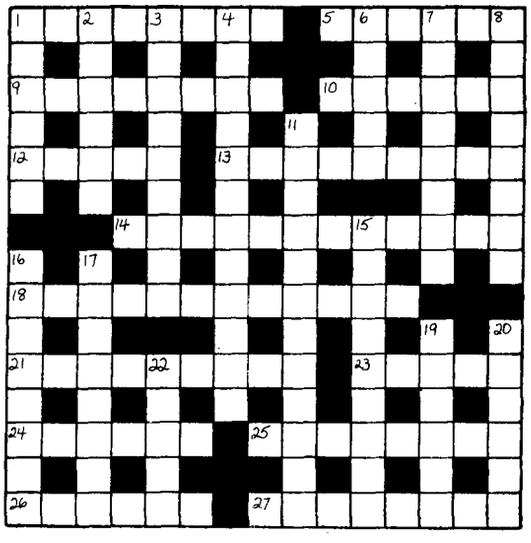
SID FIELD

Among this week's contributors:

Matthew Sweeney's poem (p.28) is from *The Lame Waltzer* to be published by Allison & Busby in late November.

Weekend Crossword 1496

PRIZES: £5 Book Tokens for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1496, New Statesman, 14-16 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU, by first post 5 November.



Name_____

Address_____

ACROSS

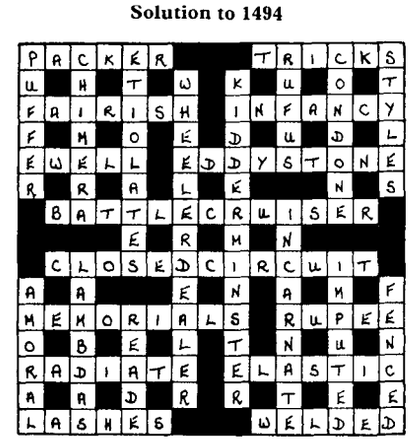
1. A wise man carries a vessel as a means of getting rid of refuse (8)
5. Please become unconscious (6)
9. The superficial make their way through without the benevolent (8)
10. Go and get married again (6)
12. Young man who sounds like a worker (5)
13. Perhaps a maiden but possible I made runs (9)
14. Etiquette of those who staff the board? (5,7)
18. Agonising tendency in the audience (12)
21. Cheese for mouse-catcher holding limb (9)
23. Fruit which becomes very soft in a drink (5)
24. Shots which behead conquerors (6)
25. Point to more money to do what is done in hospitals (8)
26. Wounds leave mortal remains if head is chopped off (6)
27. I act afterwards for an enthusiastic admirer (8)

DOWN

1. Notice about a man's name forming an entry word (6)
2. The question about the hotel is the noise of animals (6)
3. The others are about to scatter bread for a bird (9)
4. Carol gets part of dress in the vegetables (12)
6. Tablet used in the last election (5)
7. Call up with wrong date issued (8)
8. Not hell, although is included in what soldiers have to do (8)
11. Wrongly departed with time worked out in advance (12)
15. The old man follows on in a refitted liner which is without equal (9)
16. Scandalous carol about wine (8)
17. Spy meant to be corrupted by money (8)
19. Second impression makes one run (6)
20. Heavenly phenomenon which is unusually remote (6)
22. Food for the brink (5)

SETSQUARE

Solution to 1494



Prizewinners to 1494

Frank Case (Borrowash, Derby)
Kevin Henriques (London W2)
H. Pashley (Weston-super-Mare)

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Potential applicants telephoning 061-928 0793 will be sent copies of the Society's Annual Report, Accounts and magazine and details of the functions of the Chief Executive.

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AN INVITE, for any responsive female, under 40, to an evening together, in the Nottingham/Derby area. I am 35, kind, intelligent and outgoing. R.S.V.P. Box (42)1679.

ARE YOU a lively minded individual, 18-80, enjoying the arts, discussions, conferences, rambles, dancing? The Progressive League caters for Mind, Body and intellectual Stimulus. And it's so cheap. Ring 01-452 8358.

ARE YOU a man — who can be a bit unconventional? Might you enjoy a lively friendship, perhaps a caring affair? I am 46, female, professional, adventurous, a touch romantic and have finally learned to relish all the good life offers. Box (42)1686.

ATTRACTIVE, AFFECTIONATE, professional woman, 35, likes walking, cinema, urban cycling, doing nothing, overworking, visiting friends, etc. Seek similar man. London. Box (42)1699.

ATTRACTIVE DIVORCEE, young 50s, petite, interests: art, music, nature conservation, self improvement — sense of humour, seeks sincere friendship with professional male. Avon area. Box (41)1665.

ATTRACTIVE, PROFESSIONAL man (58), loves arts seeks attractive, sensual, non-smoking woman, slim/medium (any age to 53), any race/circumstances, for warm friendship/enjoyments. Pref. London/surrounding areas. Box (40)1587.

ATTRACTIVE, UNATTACHED lady, early 40s, seeks caring, professional man for friendship/outings. Own house Wakefield area. Enjoys travel, music, antiques, bridge, swimming. Box (42)1683.

BIRMINGHAM: (MUSLIM) Asian woman, mid-thirties, affectionate, unfussy, academic — wide interests: travel, good food, theology, films etc., seeks broadminded, established man, over 40, for sincere relationship, leading to marriage. Box (42)1678.

BRIGHT AND beautifullish, warm and witty, designer/writer lady, 47, Cambs. Tallish, leftish, independent, aware, gentle, real, sometimes lonely. Would like to meet congenial man. Box (42)1695.

CONTINENTAL PROFESSIONAL lady, 58, seeks an owner driver gentleman, aged 56-70, London area. Ring 01-951 4107.

DATELINE'S PSYCHOLOGICALLY accurate introductions lead to pleasant friendships, spontaneous affairs and firm, lasting relationships including marriage. All ages, all areas. Free details: Dateline Computer Dating, Dept. (7NS), 23 Abingdon Rd, London W8. Tel. 01-938 1011.

EXPERIENCED ARTISTIC and articulate man seeks a quiet, skinny, sexually passive woman, interested in books, Brecht, jazz, vegetables and Mozart or something similar. Box (42)1697.

FRIEND, COMRADE lover, London man, divorced, 61, 5' 6", seeks socialist woman. Interests: politics, philosophy, chess. Non-smoker, no religion. Quiet disposition. Permanent relationship. Box (42)1709.

GAY HULL man, 22, seeks an affectionate friend, 25-45. I'm reasonable looking, like most music, old films, theatre, books and healthy living. Box (42)1681.

GENTLEMAN, mid 50s, graduate, interested in most aspects of civilised life, mobile, seeks a compatible, tallish, shapely lady companion, living Southern England, to share leisure times and perhaps later a full rewarding life. Box (42)1712.

I'M 38, very feminine, attractive, a graduate and am seeking commitment with a completely unattached professional/businessman who's 5' 10" +, 40-50, successful, cultured, decisive, personable. Impossible? Box (42)1708.

JOHN, 42, affable, attractive and unattached, professional, about to settle in Devon, seeks friendship with lovely woman. Much-travelled with an empathy for feminist ideas and children. Will send photos and informative letter. Box (41)1664.

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LONDON MALE, 36, enjoys cinema, fringe theatre, travel, social life, pubs. Community/Social policy job. Arts graduate. Would like to meet independent woman for friendship/relationship. Box (42)1694.

LONDON MALE, graduate, 40s, reasonable appearance and temperament, passionate and broadminded, seeks sincere, serious-minded and large-busted lady, probably wealthy, for lasting relationship. ALA. Box (42)1703.

LONE LUNCHER, preferably 40 + — would you like to share a table now and then with lively lady? Knowledge of London restaurants appreciated but not essential. Box (42)1711.

MALE, FIFTYISH, lecturer, divorced, Theosophist, seeks female thirtyish-fortyish. Prefer teacher SE Counties. Box (40)1569.

MUSIC LOVER, lively divorcee (40s), professional, tall, reasonably attractive, seeks kindred spirit to share concerts and the arts. London/Home Counties. Box (42)1713.

NON-SEXIST, EMOTIONALLY mature man, 38, well travelled, cultured, articulate and aware, seeks female to share life's intellectual and physical pleasures. London, Bristol or anywhere. Box (42)1696.

PROFESSIONAL MAN, 40-ish, non-smoker, living near St Albans, seeks ladyfriend with time, needing sharing and caring. Prefer telephone contact. Box (42)1704.

PROFESSIONAL WOMAN, caring, considerate, stylish, slim, feminine, seeking permanent relationship, would like to hear from a senior professional man, cultured, unattached, tall, personable, youthful fifties. Box (42) 1707.

SINCE TALKING is one of my main pleasures, I would like a dialogue with a warm, affectionate man — we could share other pleasures too. North West/Yorks. Box (42)1680.

SLIM DIVORCEE, young 50, caring, loyal, intelligent but stagnating without the company of that 'special' gentleman. Help! Lincs/Humberside. Box (42)1682.

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WIDOW, 40s vivacious, professional, desires companionship of articulate male, for mutual enjoyment of the better things in life. North Staffordshire. Box (42)1687.

YOUTHFULLY MATURE widow, homemaker — varied interests in literature, music, walking and swimming etc., with many friends, but seeking someone special, would like to meet man, 55-65, for friendship and possible marriage. Box (42)1700.

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AGENDA

MON 21 OCT

'BENEATH THE WHITE COAT': seminars on science and politics organised by the **British Society For Social Responsibility** in Science. This week *Duncan Campbell* New Statesman: 'MYTHS AND REALITIES OF SURVEILLANCE.' 6.30pm. Adam's Arms, Conway Street, London W1 (tube Warren Street).

WEALTH & RESPONSIBILITY. Lecture series at St James's Church, Piccadilly at 1.10pm. This week **Sir Maurice Laing**, President of John Laing Plc **'My Father's Business'**. Please contact Lyn Austin on 01-734 4511 for details.

WED 23 OCT

ST JAMES'S CHURCH, PICCADILLY. Divided Britain. A major lecture series, Wednesdays at 1.05pm. **The Most Revd Derek Worlock**, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Liverpool: **'Living Bread on the Mersey.'** Details 01-734 4511.

STRIP SEARCHING IN IRELAND. Public Meeting. Speaker: Jo Richardson. Plus video. 8pm Starrh House, 57 Church Road, Richmond. Organised by Richmond & Barnes CLP.

THURS 24 OCT

PUBLIC MEETING ON NICARAGUA RAY HOOKER Nicaraguan M.P. kidnapped by the Contra in 1984, Member of Autonomy Commission for Nicaragua's Atlantic Commission for Nicaragua's Atlantic Coast. N.U.S. 20/21 Compton Terrace, London N1.

TOTTENHAM LABOUR PARTY. Public Meeting. **Anti-Apartheid, Anti-Racism.** 7.30pm, Risley Avenue School, N17. Speakers: David Kitson, Norman Atkinson MP, Bernie Grant, Martha Osamor & others. Tel 01-348 6114 for info.

FRI 25 OCT

SHAW SOCIETY. Michael Holroyd on "Shaw's Biographer." Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, Holborn. Coffee 6.30pm Meeting 7pm.

HEAR RAY HOOKER, Sandinista Representative for Bluefields Nicaragua. 7pm. Lambeth Town Hall. Plus speakers from local black church and community groups supporting Nicaragua. Followed by disco/late bar in benefit for Lambeth-Bluefields Twinning Group.

SUN 27 OCT

FIRST OPEN MEETING of INTERNATIONAL WORKING GROUP ON WOMEN & THE FAMILY. 11am-6pm Caxton House, St John's Way, London N19. **Jo Richardson MP** with speakers on violence against women in IRAN. *SUDAN & MALAYSIA. Creche/Food. All women* welcome. Volunteers needed. Tel Behjat 01-274 9408 (days) 01-735 1887 (eves). Small admission fee.

FOR DETAILS CALL DAVID JONES 01-251 5487

Hope Valley Conference 26-27 October

Organised by Red Rope, the Socialist rambling and climbing club.

This residential conference is a major initiative in countryside campaigning.

Speakers:
Peter Melchett
Chris Smith MP
David Rubinstein

Adults £26, unwaged £13, children £10. Day only rates available. Details & booking:

A. Mitchell, 203 Cemetery Rd, Sheffield S11 8FQ. (0742) 587678

SAT 2 NOV

HOW THE PUBLIC ORDER PROPOSALS AFFECT YOU!

Sat 2 Nov 1.30pm. Central Hall Westminster

Chair: Bruce Kent.
Speakers: Jack Dromey TGWU, Harry Fletcher NAPO, Marie Staunton, Sarah Spencer NCCL.

Comprehensive briefings free on registration. NCCL members & affiliates £4, others £7.

Further details/registration **Gill Lewis NCCL 01-403 3888**

CND

RALLY FOR THE HUMAN RACE

OCT 26

London, Hyde Park

Assemble 11am for march, Serpentine Rd. Rally 3.30 Hyde Park. Speakers, entertainment, Children's area, sign language, interpreter, toilets with disabled access.

Details: **CND, 22-24 Underwood St., London N1 7JQ. Tel: 01-250 4010**

SUN 3 NOV

NO MORE BHOPALS!

International Conference on issues and struggles arising from the Bhopal gas disaster.

Sun 3 Nov 10-5. County Hall

Speakers from India, French & American Union Carbide Trade Unionists, David Gee GMBTU, Thea Bock German Greens. Information contact:

Bhopal Victims Support Committee, 50/52 King Street, Southall, Middlesex 01-843 2333

WED 6 NOV

'THE BIG FISH IN THE BIBLICAL WILDERNESS'

is the title of the 1985 Ernest Jones lecture to be given by **Professor Sir Edmund Leach FBA** in the **Logan Hall, Institute of Education, 20 Bedford Way, London WC1** on Wednesday 6 Nov, 8.15 p.m.

Moses Laufer, president of the British Psycho-analytical Society, will be in the Chair.

Admission is free.

FRI 8 NOV

MIND-DAY CONFERENCE 'Mental Health in the Nuclear Age.' Examines how nuclear defence policies affect the mental health of individuals, and asks if we are more 'healthy' with the bomb. Speakers include: Dr Dorothy Rowe and Dr James Thompson. School of Pharmacy, Brunswick Square, London WC1. Cost £25, £9 unwaged, includes coffee, lunch, tea. Details/application forms from: Alban Wiseman, MIND, 22 Harley Street, London W1N 2ED Tel 01-637 0741.

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BILLBOARD

Poetry

BROTHER RESISTANCE, Rapso poet from Trinidad appears with **African Dawn,** Sat 19 Oct. 7.30pm at **Yaa Asantewa Arts Centre,** 1 Chippenham Mews, London W9. Food & Bar. Tickets £2, £2.50. 01-286 1656.

Music

AFRICAN DAWN presents an evening of dramatised poetry fused with African Music. **SERIOUS BUSINESS** – a music duo presents music crossing Gospel, Blues, Rhythm & Blues, & Jazz. **Yaa Asantewa Arts Centre,** 1 Chippenham Mews, London W9. Sat 19 Oct. 7.30pm Food & Bar. Tickets £2, £2.50, 01-286 1656.

Theatre

NATIONAL THEATRE 01-928 2252
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BLOOMSBURY THEATRE 01-387 9629
Until 26 Oct (except 23) 8pm Mon-Thurs; 6pm, 8.30pm Fri-Sat CAMBRIDGE FOOTLIGHTS in their new revue TOPICAL HEATWAVE, 23 Oct 7.30pm ELECTRONIC MUSIC NOW.

ROYAL SHAKESPEARE COMPANY
01-628 8795/638 8891 24hr info 628 2295
BARBICAN THEATRE eves 7.30 (8 Oct 7pm) mats 2.30 Thurs & Sat
LES MISÉRABLES a new musical. *'Brilliant... exciting'* F. Times. *'Breathtaking'* Gdn. Ends 23 Nov.
BARKER AT THE PIT eves 7.30, mats 2pm Thurs & Sat. CRIMES IN HOT COUNTRIES, DOWNCHILD and THE CASTLE – 3 new plays by Howard Barker. Season ends 23 Nov. *These plays contain scenes which may be disturbing.*

HALF MOON THEATRE 213 Mile End Road. 01-790 4000. Eves 7.30pm. **Jack Rosenthal's SPEND, SPEND, SPEND.** *The true story of the Pools Winners who spent their way through £152,000.*

PERFORMING ARTS BOOKFAIR. Olivier Foyer National Theatre. 1st & 2nd November 2-9 pm & 10am-8pm. Includes Posters, Programmes, Autographs, other Ephemera and thousands of books.

FELLOWSHIPS

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Applications are invited for HALLSWORTH FELLOWSHIPS in advanced work in the field of Political Economy (including Public Administration). Stipends within the range **£7,520-£21,235 pa** (under review) according to qualifications and experience.

These Fellowships are not awarded for postgraduate study and applicants should have experience which will qualify them to carry out a substantial piece of original research. Enquiries about the scope of the Fellowships are welcomed. Further particulars and application forms (returnable by 1 December) are obtainable from: **The Registrar (Academic Staffing), The University, Manchester M13 9PL.** Please state for which Fellowship details are required and quote ref. 230/85/NS.

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NO SIMPLE YES OR NO REPLY IS POSSIBLE.
DOES YOUR MOTHER KNOW YOU'RE GAY?
JANIS GOODMAN

CHESS

Waking Dragon

THE CHINESE have their own form of chess which bears a sort of family resemblance to the game we know, the European product that has become the international staple. A 'river' separating the two halves of the board and forming a barrier which only certain pieces may cross is the most distinctive feature of the game of their ancestors. Until the 1970s they were content with this domestic brand. By then it was clear enough that the rest of the world was not going to learn their game, so the Chinese resolved to go international and have started participating in FIDE events.

In their first Olympiad — Buenos Aires 1978 — the Chinese team finished in 20th place, which was pretty good going for debutants. As was only to be expected, their style was raw and their theoretical knowledge fragmentary. But this was compensated by a vigour and freshness that more experienced opponents might envy. The whole performance was capped by an episode that has become legendary. In an early round the Icelandic grandmaster Sigurjonsson succumbed to Chi in a scrappy game. Afterwards Jan Hein Donner accosted his GM colleague with the words 'Tell me, Gudmundur, how can a European grandmaster lose to a Chinaman?'. Delivered in a tone of reproachful incredulity. All the best stories have nemesis in store for such hubris and, sure enough, a few rounds later Donner found out how it could happen when he was annihilated in a mere 20 moves by Liu Wen Che, the Chinese board three.

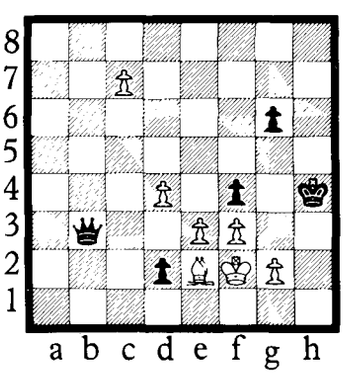
By now the Chinese regularly turn out highly competent sides, but as yet have not produced an individual player capable of succeeding at the highest level. At least, not until a 24 year old student called Ming-Qien Wu went to play in the women's Interzonal in Zelesnovodsk this July. Wu was one of the lowest-rated players in the tournament, and in any case it was assumed that the contest for the top three qualifying places would be an internal affair between the five Russians. Yet Wu stormed through the tournament, beating four of the five Russians, and coming a close second behind Litinskaia. Here is a game from the event in which she conducts the attack with great assurance:

Wu-Zaitseva, Caro-Kann Defence

1. e4 c6 2. d4 d5 3. Nc3 dxe4 4. Nxe4 Nf6 5. Nxf6 + exf6 6. c3 Bd6 7. Bd3 0-0 8. Ne2 Re8 9. Qc2 g6 10. Be3 Nd7 11. h4 Nf8 12. h5 Be6 13. hxg6 fxg6 14. c4 Qe7 15. 0-0-0 Qf7 16. Rh6 b5 17. c5 Bc7 18. Rdh1 f5 19. g4 Bd5 20. Rlh4 f4? Black cracks under the pressure along the b1-h7 diagonal. Maybe 20... Bd8 was a better try. **21. Rxh7! Qf6** Resignation, but if 21... Nxh7 22. Bxg6 is terminal. **22. Rh8 + Kg7 23. Bd2 Re7 24. b3 Rae8 25. g5! Qxg5 26. Nxf4 Qgl + 27. Kb2 Bf3 28. Nxg6 Nxg6 29. R8h7 + Kf6 30. Bxg6 Rxh7 31. Qf5 + 1-0.**

Problem

White to play and win.



Solution

1. c8 = Q fxe3 + 2. Kg1 d1 = Q + 3. Kh2! Qxd4 4. Qh8 + ! Qxh8 5. f4 and even two Queens can do nothing against 6. g3 mate. Composed by V. Vinchenko, 1979.

George Botterill

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QUIZ

1) Which actor who died this month played the Pharoah in Cecil B. de Mille's *The Ten Commandments*?
2) In which capacity did Orson Welles win an Oscar for *Citizen Kane* — as actor, writer or director?
3) To which body were Tory MPs John Stokes, John Selwyn Gummer, Peter Bruinvels and Brian Mawhinney elected recently?
4) To which body were Ted O'Brien, Margaret Beckett and Gordon Colling elected recently?
5) Who said last week 'For the first time in my life I've got the kitchen I've always wanted'?
6) Who was recently described by Pierre Cardin as 'a woman of great intelligence and even brilliance, a strong woman with good taste'?
7) What is the title of Sara Keays's book?
8) Which Labour MP recently wrote a novel called *Power Failure*?
9) Which Labour MP recently bought an 'electric bicycle' for £450?
10) In Jeffrey Archer's famous phrase, 'I was unemployed, with debts of' — how much?

Answers

1) Yul Brynner; 2) writer; 3) Church of England General Synod; 4) Labour Party National Executive; 5) Margaret Thatcher; 6) Raisa Gorbachev; 7) *A Question of Judgement*; 8) Brian Sedgemore; 9) Tony Benn; 10) £400,000

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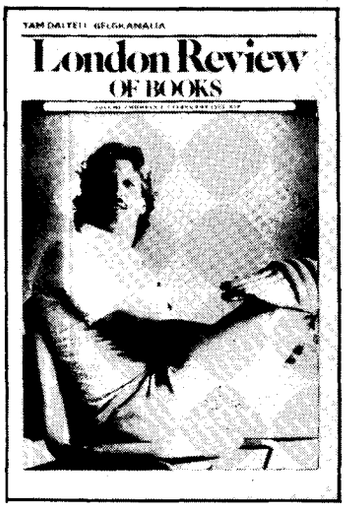

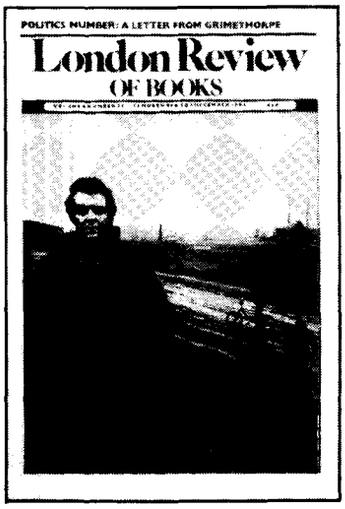

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